FREE WITH BRITAIN'S BEST-SELLING MAC MAG!

MAC GAMER

CHRISTMAS 1995 ■ FREE WITH MACFORMAT 32

Win Mac games worth over £600

Give it some stick!

Your essential guide to the best new games this Christmas

Inside the LucasArts empire

Future PUBLISHING
YOUR GUARANTEE OF VALUE

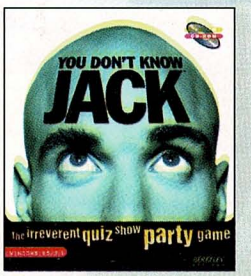
Marathon 2 preview • The finest Mac games ever
The power of *Descent* • Joysticks tested • *Doom 2*

NEW! from BERKELEY® SYSTEMS

HEY! Are You Sitting in Front of your Mac PLAYING with yourself?

Why not invite some friends and Make it a PARTY

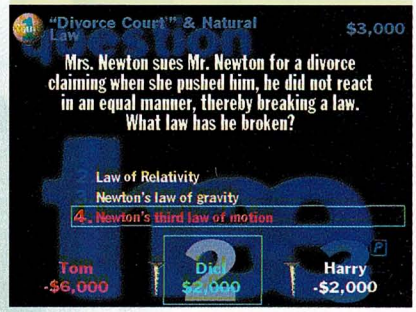
You Don't Know Jack!

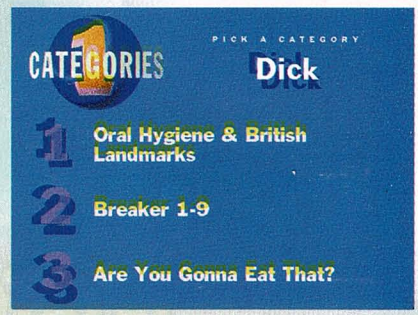


With Wall-to-wall studio sound effects and original music, You Don't Know Jack and its sarcastic host will whisk you into the quiz show from hell. Get the question right and score some cash; get it wrong and pay the price! This is the only game that includes: Gibberish questions; Fiber Optica Field Trips; Jack Attack questions; Don't be a Wimp Buzzer and Screw Your Neighbour! Up to three players, over twenty hours of non-repetitive verbal abuse and eight-hundred questions. Ready? Put your knowledge to the test and your ego on the line. Those family get-togethers will never be quite the same again!

Warning: the product contains mature content, including suggestive sexual references and language that may not be suitable for children. Besides, they won't get it anyway.

- 800+ questions & 20 hours of verbal abuse
- 1,2 or 3 players and no additional equipment is needed
- Tournament setting lets you play with 4 to 225 of your closest friends
- Game play so fast, you'll get blisters!
- Heart Pounding music and sound effects
- PowerPC Native

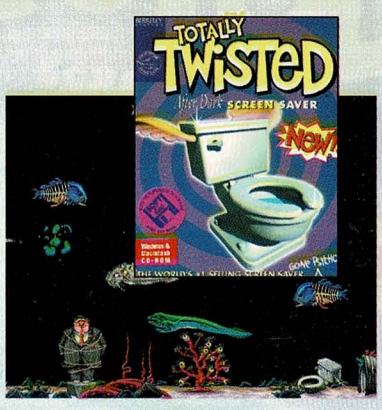

"Divorce Court" & Natural Law
$3,000
Mrs. Newton sues Mr. Newton for a divorce claiming when she pushed him, he did not react in an equal manner, thereby breaking a law. What law has he broken?
Law of Relativity
Newton's law of gravity
4. Newton's third law of motion
Tom
-$6,000
Dick
$2,000
Harry
-$2,000



The Worlds #1 selling screen saver gone psycho...

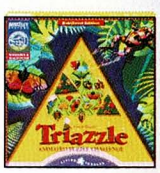
Totally Twisted

Totally Twisted After Dark screen saver contains 13 totally over the top twisted screen saving displays. Do you like Flying Toasters? Wait 'til you see Flying Toilets, complete with occupants! Take a spin with Mowin Man in a field of cute, cuddly kitties — or should that be road kill? This outrageous screen saver includes Bungee roulette, Chameleons, Coming Soon, FrankenScreen, Mike's So Called Life, Phlegm Boy, Toxic Swamp, Voyeur, Mime Hunt, Mowin' Boris and of course, the flying toilets! WARNING—this product contains mature content, don't buy if offended easily!



Even more hot products from Berkeley!

Triazzle



Triazzle is a puzzle game that will entertain the entire family for hours. A variety of puzzle shapes and creatures create a fresh experience every time you play. The deceptively simple looking puzzles have millions of combinations, but only one solution. And watch the rain forest creatures come to life as you solve the puzzle!

Looney Tunes

Twelve gut-bustin Looney Tunes screen-saving cartoons—the funniest screen saver ever! Stunning animation, music, sound effects and Looney Tune voices. Grab a bite with the Tasmanian Devil; Rendezvous with Pepe Le Pew; Invade Earth with Marvin the Martian; Shop at ACME... Featuring Bugs Bunny, Wile E Coyote, Road Runner, Sylvester & Tweety and more!

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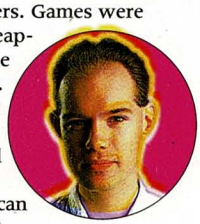
MACGAMER

This time it's serious

After a few false starts, it's finally happening. Let no-one doubt the Mac games scene has reached critical mass and is set to thrive from here on in.

Let's face facts – the Mac was never supposed to be a games machine. When it first wowed the world with the best computer control system around, there were business machines and then there were home computers. Games were only released on cheaper computers like the Amiga and Atari ST.



Things change. The power of computers has increased to a point where mill-ions of people can afford machines that enable them to do things they never realised they could. Your Mac can help you design reports and keep track of your accounts. It can educate you and entertain you.

The Mac has been cut loose from people's preconceptions: it's no longer 'that cool computer designers use'. It's now the cool computer for everyone, no matter what walk of of life you tread.

In 1995, there are hundreds of thousands of Macs in Britain alone; and twenty million across the world. Yet games have been pretty thin on the ground. The big names you saw on other machines remained elusive. I used to go to trade shows and ask what plans games firms had for the Mac, and they'd just laugh. Really.

But now we've got the likes of *Doom 2*, *Descent* and *Full Throttle* to buy, with *Marathon 2: Durandal* coming soon. You'll read about them inside. Life is sweet, games are great and we're here to share it all with you. MACGAMER will give you a taste of what's coming up this Christmas and into 1996. Please let us know what you think of it.

MACGAMER is more than a celebration of a booming area of Mac activity: it's an affirmation of the most versatile personal computer ever made.

RICHARD HILL

Level One

The MACGAMER experience starts here. All the information you need, condensed into byte-sized pieces.

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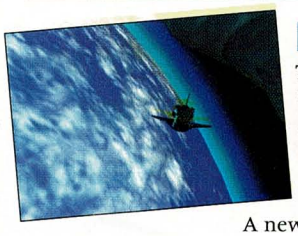
Marathon 2 14

Bungie Software on the sequel to the most acclaimed Mac game of all. Discover how they've made the best even better.



LucasArts 17

The very latest from the house that George built – *Full Throttle, The Dig, Rebel Assault 2* and a few surprises.

Descent 20

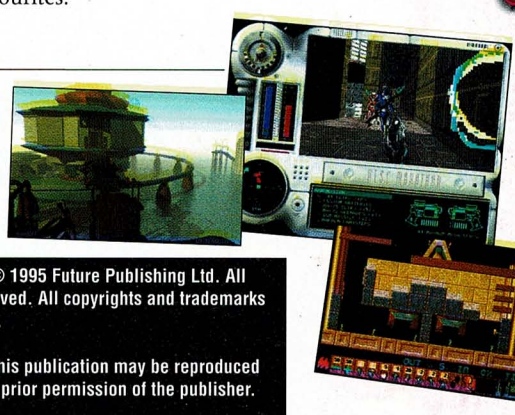
A new contender for the Mac crown – but why do you need to have a PowerMac to play it? Find out here.

Joysticks 22

Games for the Mac have never been better, but how good are the controllers to play them with? MACGAMER casts a critical eye.

The MACGAMER Hall of Fame 27

The boldest, the bravest and the most beautiful – which are the Mac games that have captured our hearts? MACGAMER reveals its favourites.



Competition 30

Tell us what we've been missing by nominating your favourite game and you could win the best Mac games in the world.

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MACGAMER – 'a mixture of inspiration, hard work and sheer dumb luck'.

The Mac games

If you're one of the games illiterati, this handy MacGamer crib sheet is for you. Impress the kids with your encyclopaedic knowledge, starting with the oldest video game type of all...

Adventure

Adventure titles like *Colossal Cave* date back to the days when computers were room-sized but could only display text. The basic idea was that you explored an environment using prose descriptions ('You are entering a shady grove, with an orc reading a book to your north'), then discovered objects and used them to solve puzzles. You would control the game by typing in simple commands ('Go North', 'Take Book'), but this system grew in sophistication until point-and-click with your mouse showed and wiped it out.

Even Mac titles with the spectacular visuals of *Myst* and *Buried in Time* are still known as graphic adventures, acknowledging the core idea of exploration that remains beneath the surface.

RPG

The RPG (role-playing game) is a close relation to the adventure. It started life away from the computer screen in the form of games like *Dungeons and Dragons* (the justly-feared spawn of the twenty-sided dice and badly-painted model figures).

D&D moved across to the Mac along with numerous original titles like Ishar. You played the hero exploring the dungeon, which was under the control of the computer. Your Mac also provided companions for your journey and monitored the health and capabilities of all the characters. But the use of clichéd fantasy situations, with lands peopled with elves and dwarves, in virtually every RPG remains unchanged.

Shoot-'em-up

As the early and primitive computer developed into the modern personal com-puter, game types like adventures have been along for the ride the whole time, whereas others came from another place entirely – the arcade.

Shoot-'em-ups are the games that made the arcades a success, with addictive blasters like *Galaxians, Defender* and *Space Invaders* swallowing coins as fast as you could put them in. With the exception of faster and more detailed graphics, shoot-'em-ups have hardly changed in years – but then, maybe they haven't had to.

Sim

Short for simulation, of course. Instead of looking into your Mac's screen,

Incoming!

Look out for these missiles of gaming bliss detonating on your Mac soon.

November

Backpacker	Work your way around the world	BMG
Bad Day on the Midway	Weirdness at the funfair	Time Warner
Comanche	Your chance to fly a whirlybird	Nova Logic
The Dark Eye	Spooky	Time Warner
Descent	Dizzying shoot-'em-up	Interplay
Dust	Western adventure	BMG
Endorfun	Delirious puzzling	Time Warner
IndyCar Racing 2	Realistic racing sim	Virgin
Primal Rage	Dinosaurs in mortal combat	Time Warner
SimCity 2000 Urban Renewal Kit	Extras for budding town mayors	Maxis
Al Unser Jr's Arcade Racing	Unashamed racing action	Mindscape
Trophy Bass	Unashamed fishing action	Sierra
USS Ticonderoga	Warship battles	Mindscape

December

BrainDead 13	Animated monster mash	Empire
Gender Wars	Men vs women – only one wins	SCi
Kingdom O Magic	Irreverent fantasy	SCi
Kingdom: The Far Reaches	Majestic fantasy	Interplay
System Shock	The dark side of technology	Electronic Arts
X-Wing Collectors CD	Use the Force, Luke	Virgin

January to March 1996

Adventures of the Smart Patrol	From 1980s electronic group Devo	Time Warner
Big Red Racing	Pumped-up racing romp	Domark
The Lawnmower Man 2	Virtual reality adventures	SCi
SimIsle	SimRainForest	Maxis

guide

with a sim you're peering out of the cockpit of a plane, helicopter or Formula 1 car. Most sims delight in making things as realistic as possible, using the equations of gravity, acceleration and all those other scientific principles that glazed your eyes over at school to calculate the effect your actions have on your vehicle.

God game

A close cousin to the sim, the god game puts you in command of something more grand than a mere supersonic fighter plane with a devastating payload of weaponry. Life itself is your plaything with *Populous*, *Civilisation* and *SimCity*. Using information provided by complex maps and figures, you're responsible for guiding a population to the ultimate goal, whether it's creating an efficient city or spreading across a land and wiping out your fellow men.

Beat-'em-up

Best played by two, the beat-'em-up gives you ever more inventive ways of beating the crap out of your opponent. Thus it has proved uncommonly popular with boys of all ages.

The arrival of *Primal Rage*, a textbook sideways-on duel to the death between dinosaurs, on the Mac is a sure sign that it's arrived as a games machine at last.

3D Shoot-'em-up

The 3D shooter is a brand new game type that any true games expert must master. It's a perfect example of how no game type can thrive until technology is advanced enough to support it. It's also very much a product of its time, taking the violent, against-all-the-odds sensibilities and high tech designs of films like *Aliens* and *Terminator 2*, and plunging you into the midst of an all-out onslaught of action.

Marathon, *Doom 2*, *Dark Forces* – all of these take the first person view of RPGs and use the power of the Mac to enable you to move around them as though you were there.

Puzzle

Pretty self-explanatory, puzzles – you just have to solve them without going completely insane. Puzzles were abstract affairs of coloured blocks; until the day *Lemmings* came into town. It added interaction between characters on the screen and you, which had always been a part of other game types. It also used exploding lemmings to add violence, which had played an essential part of making every other game type a success, but had been sadly absent in the puzzle genre. MG

Skullcracker	Bounty hunting in a B-movie world	BMG
XS	Serious sci-fi weaponry	SCi

April to June 1996

The Dig	Galaxy-spanning Spielberg epic	Virgin
Flight Unlimited	What it feels like to fly	Virgin
IFL	Your chance to be a footie manager	Team 17
Mortimer and the Riddles of the Medallion	Adventure for kids	Virgin
Picture Perfect Golf	Super-real putting practice	Empire
Rebel Assault II	The Empire strikes back	Virgin
Worms	Cartoon warfare	Team 17

Sometime in 1996

Death Trap Dungeon	Action-packed role player	Domark
Mortal Kombat II	The famous beat-em-up	Interplay
NBA Jam Tournament Edition	Basketball action	Interplay
Phantasmagoria	Controversial horror epic	Sierra
Titanic	It'll end in tears	BMG
Torin's Passage	Family adventure	Sierra

'When it's ready'

Marathon 2: Durandal	*Marathon* – only more so	Bungie

WADs in store

Discover why *Hell on Earth* was just the beginning with extra levels for *Doom 2*. You'll find all the levels on our CD-ROM.

DATAPOINT

You must have *Doom 2* to try these extra levels. The game received 90% in MACFORMAT 31 and costs £44.99. For more details contact Virgin on 0171 368 2255.

You've blasted your way through the very last level in *Doom 2: Hell on Earth*. Now what? Is it time time to hang up your shotgun? Dear me no. Now it's time to try some WADs.

In *Doom* terminology, a WAD is a file containing the data that describes a *Doom* level or levels. Ever since the original *Doom* came out on the PC, there have been shareware level editing programs available. This enabled fanatics everywhere to build their own *Doom* levels from scratch and save them as WADs for other people to try. Evidently there's something very satisfying about creating you own personal hell, as there are now thousands of WADs available on Internet sites, with more appearing every day. As a Mac *Doom 2* player, all of these become your inheritance.

Six of the best WADs ever made are on this issue's CD-ROM. Pride of place goes to the *Raven* series – eleven levels so brilliantly crafted that id Software, the makers of *Doom*, actually took on the creators as staff to write for them. The eight levels of *ASDoom 2* are also widely praised, while *Butcher* and *Archeron 22* show what you can achieve while sticking to a single-level design.

Surreal 22 imports new textures for the walls and floors , while *Quit Bug'n Me* is a perfect example of a Death-Match WAD, a game where your best friend and you can play over linked-together Macs to kill each other in the bloodiest way possible. If you have a friend with a PC, you can connect his machine to your Mac and shoot him to pieces too.

To use these WADs, simply drag-and-drop them onto your copy of *Doom 2*. When you reach the screen that asks if you're loading a saved game or starting afresh, click on **New Game** to load the WAD. *Archeron 22* doesn't take over from the regular *Doom 2* levels until level three; but if you can't wait (or you can't get that far, nyah nyah), start a game and type 'idclev03' and press **[return]** to jump straight to that level. MG

Battle your way through a torrent of mayhem in *Butcher*.

Take on your loved ones with a rapid-fire cannon in the DeathMatch *Quit Buggin' Me*.

Archeron 22, played over a single level, is inspired by the portrait of Hell called *Dante's Inferno*.

Raven Software's levels got the team hired to write more by *Doom's* creators.

Surreal 2 goes wild with a completely new set of textures while you go wild with a chainsaw.

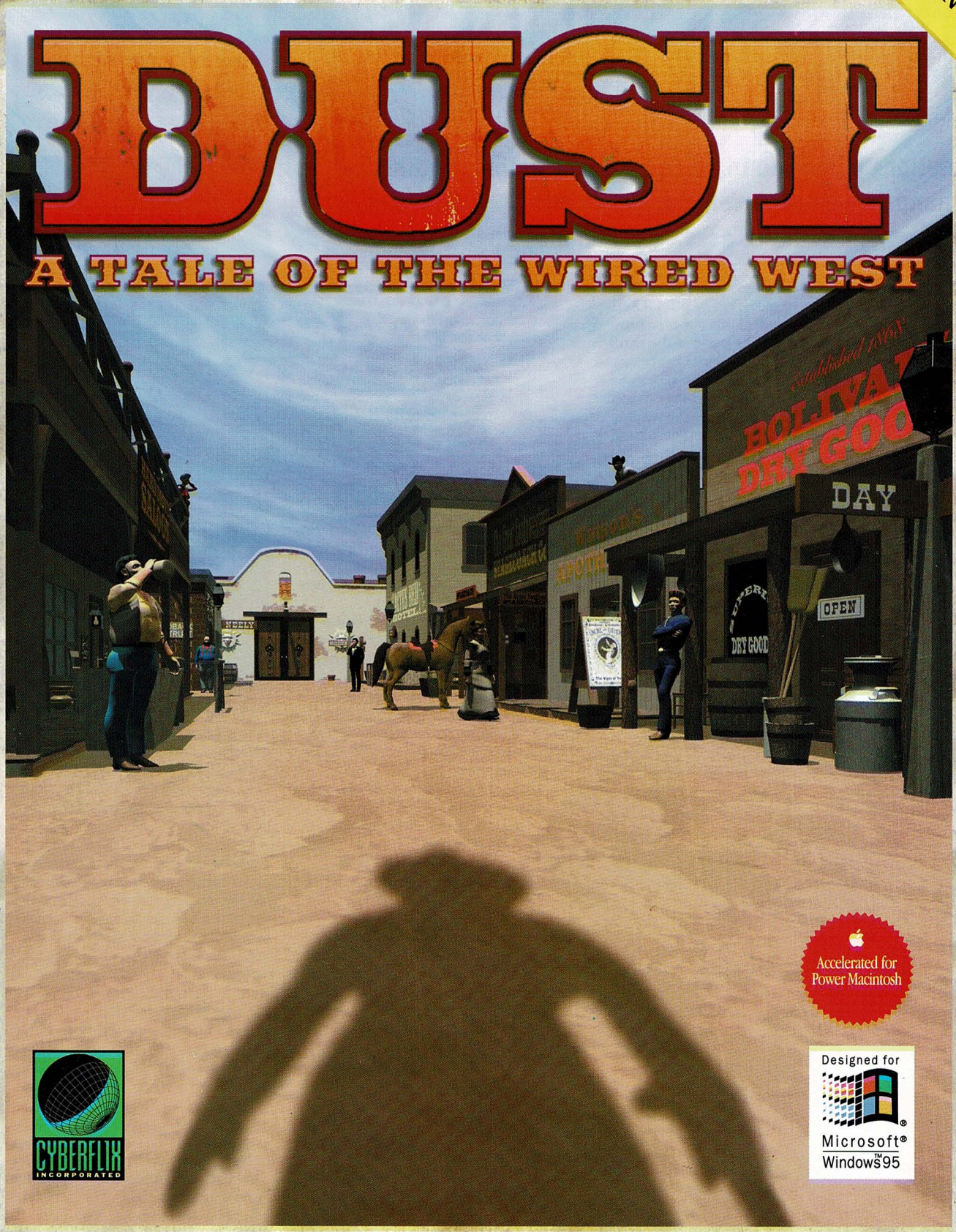
ASDoom 2 challenges you to eight levels. Look out for snipers above you.

Five Days. One Town. No Law.

CD ROM
WINDOWS
& MACINTOSH

DUST

A TALE OF THE WIRED WEST



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The real thing

Simulations place you in the heart of the action, putting you in command of a real life vehicle. With sims from two companies on their way, MACGAMER asks: 'How do they do that?'

Comanche gives you the chance to fly a helicopter so advanced it isn't in use just yet.

DATAPOINT

IndyCar Racing 2 is due out this month, but the price is yet to be set. For more details contact Virgin on 1071 368 2255. Comanche is also out now for £39.99. For more details contact NovaLogic on 0171 607 9707.

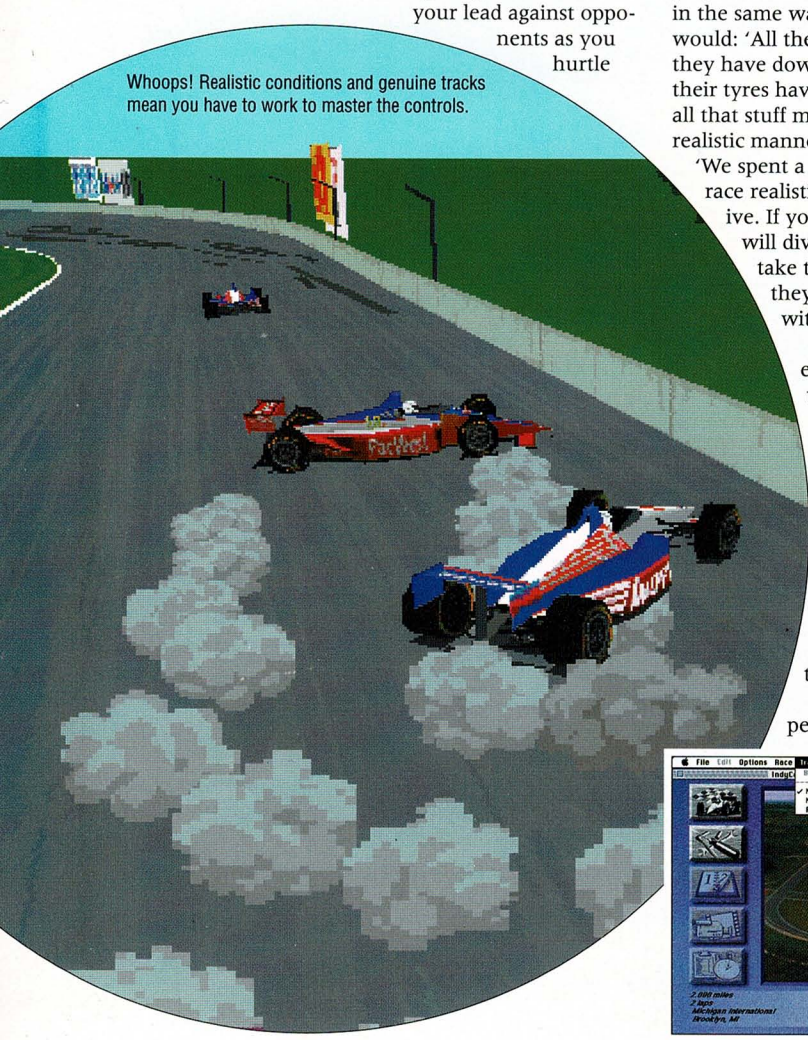
Few of us ever get the chance to race a car or pilot a helicopter. But your Mac can give you some of the thrill with a sim – a computer representation that puts you in the shoes of a fighter pilot or a Grand Prix driver.

While you won't feel the wind in your hair, sims can give you a good idea of what it's like to be there without placing you at risk or costing you much money. For the programmers who create these most adult of games, making you believe it's true requires a lot of behind-the-scenes trickery.

INDYCAR RACING 2

The Papyrus Design Group produce racing sims where you're behind the wheel of a car fighting to maintain your lead against opponents as you hurtle round a circuit. *IndyCar Racing 2* is the first to appear on the Mac, but it's one of their most convincing yet. You have 15 circuits, including the famous IndyCar oval tracks, to race on against cars controlled by the computer.

Whoops! Realistic conditions and genuine tracks mean you have to work to master the controls.



Adam Levesque, Papyrus' Game Designer, says it's important for the player that the cars in the game move in the same way as the real cars would: 'All the cars have grip levels, they have downward force levels; their tyres have limits of adhesion and all that stuff makes the cars drive in a realistic manner.

'We spent a lot of time making them race realistically. They're aggressive. If you give them room they will dive down in on you and take the corner away. But they are a lot of fun to race with.'

Papyrus scrutinise every detail down to the tyres. 'We're modelling the heat, the slip angle, the grip and the tyre wear,' says Levesque. 'In addition to that, all the other garage features we offer – changing the wing settings, changing the shock settings, – all those things affect the way the car drives.

'One of the things people find is that when they take the time and learn what the different settings do, they'll realise that it actually does make a difference. Once they understand that they can try and make the car drive faster and better.'

Papyrus' first game for the Mac is enabling them to try things they'd never contemplated before. 'One of the big features that we've done on the Mac is take advantage of the voice recognition software that ships with many Power Macs,' says Levesque. 'When you're driving around and you want to go into the pit you can say: "Change wing three degrees," and it will change the wing setting to that. Then you can say, "Twenty gallons of fuel and four tyres," and it will do that the next time you come into the pit.'

COMANCHE

In NovaLogic's *Comanche*, you become a helicopter pilot battling for your life against desperate odds. The helicopter you get to fly is a Boeing Sikorsky RAH-66 Comanche, which is actually still in the testing stage.

Kyle Freeman, the original designer of the game, says they had to interpret their research carefully. 'We contacted the manufacturers of the Comanche Helicopter, as well as the manufacturers of the cockpit and other subsystems. Since the Comanche is not yet flying, we projected what they where doing into the near future and came

Surreal thing

Edgar Allen Poe's short stories come to the Mac in a new CD-ROM.

You probably know Poe stories like *The Raven* and *The Fall of the House of Usher,* from the Roger Corman films if not from the original prose. Now these tales and their companions have inspired the making of *The Dark Eye,* a new CD-ROM adventure. You travel through several short stories based on Poe's work, playing an active role in each plot as it unravels. The challenge for you is to survive the story's telling, as some participants have murder on their minds.

The task for *The Dark Eye's* makers, Inscape, was to bring an otherworldy, Gothic feel to the computer, which is too often associated with gleaming, modern textures. To help them, Inscape enlisted the help of Doug Beswick, an animator who's worked on films like *The Addams Family* and *Aliens;* although it's the distinctive feel his designs brought to the blackly comic fantasy *Beetlejuice* that sticks in the mind the most.

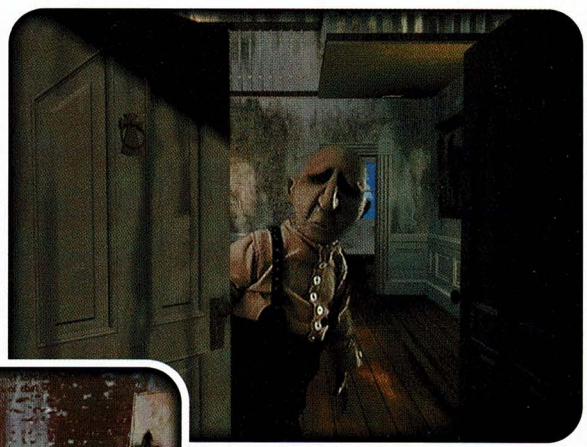
Beswick used models filmed in meticulous stop-frame animation to make haunting characters, their bleak lives written in bold strokes across their faces. Inscape themselves used up-to-the-minute Mac 3D techniques to create the settings they live in. The sound needed to be as different from the norm as the visuals: sounds like howling winds and creaking floorboards are exaggerated to unsettling effect. Notorious author William Borroughs was persuaded to contribute a voice full of all the experiences life can offer, while musician Thomas Dolby added baroque signatures of music.

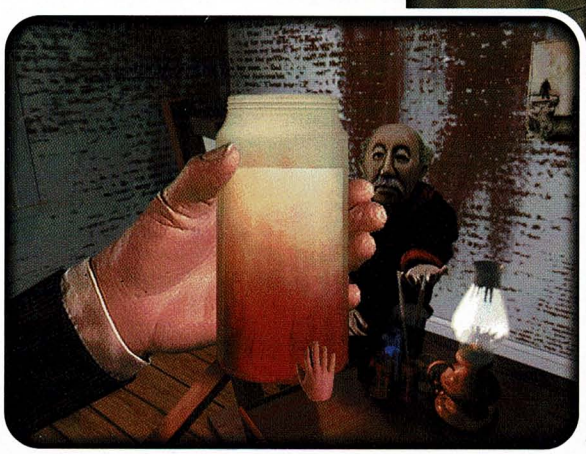
The Dark Eye will stand or fall on how well it evokes its source, but the game has been designed to be so easy to use that at least you'll only have to focus on the plot. You control your actions using a disembodied hand (another link to *The Addams Family,* perhaps), which points out the paths to take, as well as opening doors or writing when needed. MG

The Dark Eye captures the elegiac atmosphere of Poe's short stories and makes them interactive.

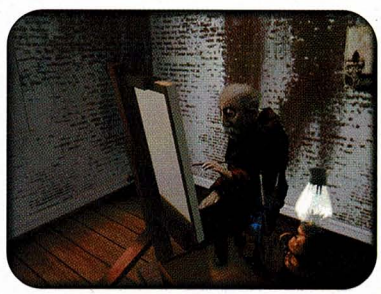
DataPoint

The Dark Eye is released this month for £39.99. You'll need an LCII or better with 8Mb of RAM, System 7 or later, a 13-inch colour screen and a double-speed CD-ROM drive. For more details contact Time Warner on 0171 391 4300.





Model animation and 3D rendered backgrounds are combined as you explore Poe's imagination.



up with the very flyable (and destructive) helicopter you see in the game.

'We also brought in pilots and other military types to test fly the game. After talking to them, it became clear they have a dark sense of humour. Much of that humour found its way into the mission briefings. Also, you hear some authentic military jargon on your radio during the game.'

Making you believe you're really there requires a delicate balance of technical accuracy and exaggeration, says Freeman. 'The thing we just had to get right was the sense of peril. War stories always go something like "I raised up out of the gully and suddenly saw a stinger missile fly by my window. I had no idea where it came from but I knew I was a goner."

'One example is that the missiles are slightly larger in the game than in reality. They just made the game seem more real and consistent with our pilots' recollection of war. Also, in the easier campaigns, we exaggerated the amount of damage your helicopter could take. This allowed more action for the beginner, and is not unprecedented in real military simulators.

'The real Comanche has an onboard computer that translates simplified pilot commands into the real collective, cyclic, and throttle needed to manoeuvre the craft. It should act more like a high performance flying car than a helicopter, and the game followed suit.' MG

Mac surfin'

The Internet, the system that enables your Mac to link with computers worldwide, is a gold mine of Mac game info. These are some of the best newsgroups and Web sites around.

Infomercials

Ambrosia Software, Inc
http://www.digitmad.com/ambrosia/ambrosia.html
Ambrosia, the makers of top games like *Aperion* and *Swoop*, are the kings of Mac shareware. Download programs to try before you buy.

Bungie Intergalactic Software
http://www.bungie.com/
Worshipped by Mac lovers everywhere, the dudes behind *Marathon* unleash complex animated pages and massive demo files that will test your modem and your phone bill account to the limit.

Graphic Simulations Corporation
http://graphsim.com/graphsim/
Get free upgrades of top flight sim *F/A-18 Hornet* and, if you've got the right software, hold dogfights against other players live over the Net.

LucasArts Entertainment Company
http://www.lucasarts.com/
Star Wars, Indiana Jones... you want more? Demos and screen shots of LucasArts hits, plus gossip in the *Adventurer* newsletter.

MacPlay
http://www.macplay.com/
Consistent supporters of the Mac, MacPlay preview what's coming up on your favourite computer.

Fanboys

The comp.sys.mac.games newsgroups
Newsgroups are the meeting place for fans of all types and Mac gamers are no exception. Hear all the gossip, help out fellow fans or best of all, get into huge arguments! Ask your service provider for details about accessing newsgroups or see our guide in MACFORMAT 31.

Games Domain
http://wcl-rs.bham.ac.uk/GamesDomain
The top games magazine on the Web – news, rumours and programs to download for all top computers, including the Mac.

Marathon Central
http://www.amug.org/~marathon/
'The one stop for all your *Marathon* needs.' Cheats and editors plus fan discussion of the Mac's favourite game.

MacES - Macintosh Entertainment Software
http://www.usyd.edu.au/~dchallis/MacES.html
Tour the Mac gaming universe with this convenient collection of links to the best resources on the Net.

Macintosh Recreation
http://www.astro.nwu.edu/lentz/mac/recreation/home-mac-games.html
The upper class Mac games page. A collection of links that reaches the parts other jumplists overlook.

Freebies

Info-Mac Archive
http://src.doc.ic.ac.uk/packages/info-mac/_Game
Hundreds of free and shareware Mac games to download; but take our advice – save hours on the Net and get the MACFORMAT CD-ROM. Save your money for the shareware fees.

Zarf's List of Interactive Games on the Web
http://www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/andrew/org/kgb/www/zarf/games.html
now you can play games live on the Web with this jumplist to interactive sites, including TV Land and Lemonade.

DATAPOINT

You'll need a modem and an Internet account if you want to visit these sites with your Mac. Our FutureNet site has links to each of these sites in MACFORMAT'S special MACGAMER area. The FutureNet address is http://www.futurenet.co.uk/

EUROPE'S LARGEST KILLER OF TIME

ZOOP - YOU MAY ALREADY BE ADDICTED

No one is immune

◄·· Parents ··►

Zoop™

the game

◄·· Children ··►

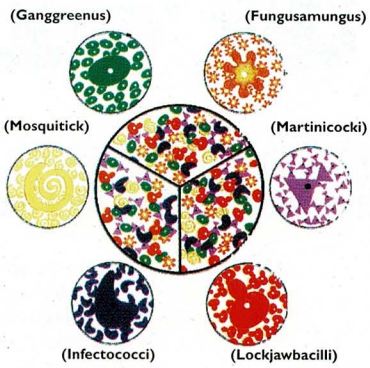
Resting

Output of the Heart
(gallons of blood per minute) when man is:

Walking

Playing Zoop

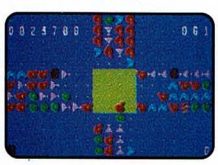
(zoopx10⁽¹⁰⁾)



A healthy iris

The same iris after Zoop

The stages of Zoop
(what to look for)



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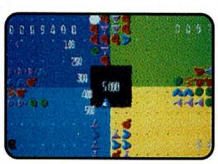

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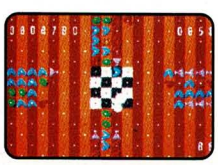
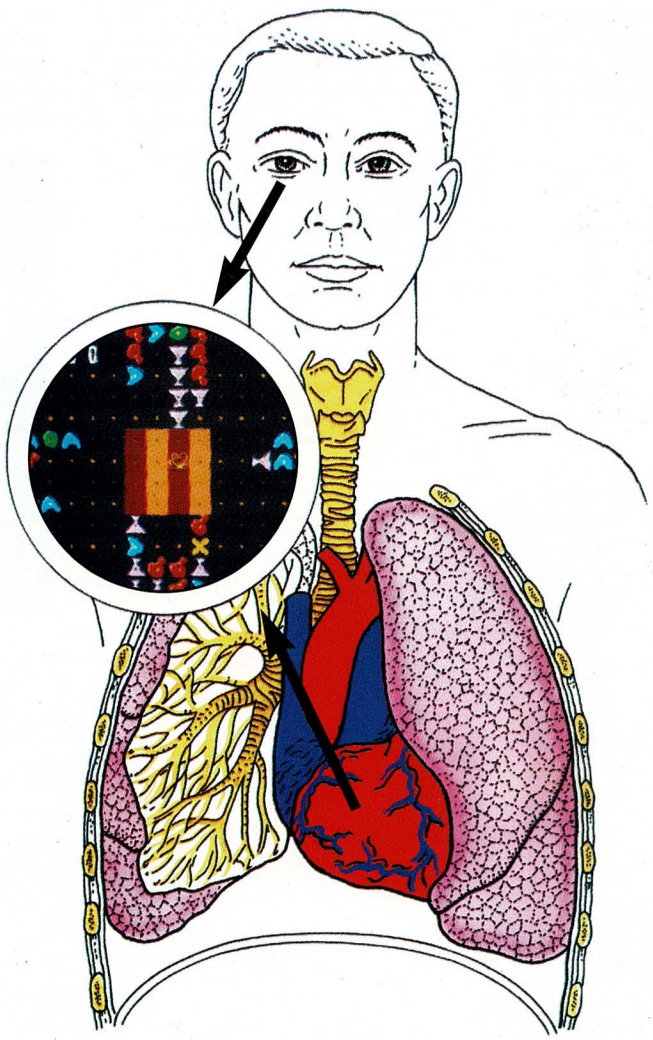


(level 8)

(level 9)

(this pattern continues on, and sadly always leads to one's demise)



It looks like a harmless video game until it enters the blood stream and mixes with your DNA. In order to eradicate this affliction we must learn its moves, understand its thinking and anticipate its next move. Only then can we begin to battle and conquer this killer.

AVAILABLE AT: Dixons, Curry's, PC World, Toys R Us, Future Zone, HMV, Virgin/Our Price and all good games stockists

Known carriers of Zoop

Megadrive™

SNES®

Game Boy™

CD-ROM

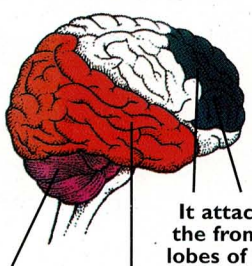
Macintosh™

PC

PlayStation™
COMING 96

Saturn™
COMING 96

How Zoop affects the brain



It slowly eats at the Cerebellum restricting: movement, coordination, balance

It attacks the frontal lobes of the Cerebrum impairing: judgement, higher learning, reason

It mutates the Medulla causing irregular: digestion, respiration, heartbeat

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Are you hooked yet?
http//:/www.demon.co.uk/noonien/zoop.html

BrainDead 13

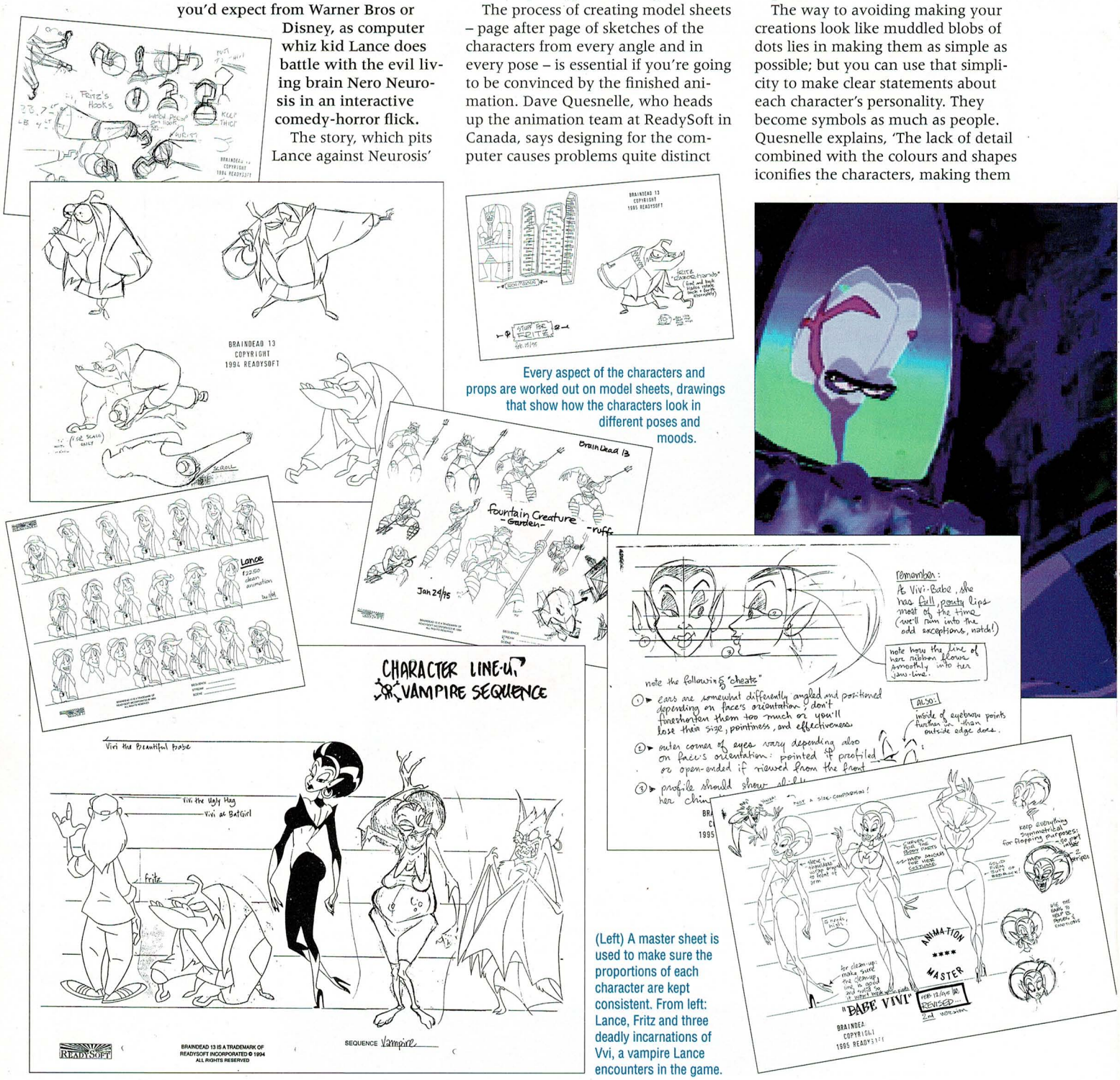
The makers of *Dragon's Lair* and *Space Ace* are back with a new set of characters and a new approach to games.

There are still some things you can't do on a Mac. Take *BrainDead 13*, for example. The latest title from ReadySoft features the sort of animation you'd expect from Warner Bros or Disney, as computer whiz kid Lance does battle with the evil living brain Nero Neurosis in an interactive comedy-horror flick.

The story, which pits Lance against Neurosis' creatures, is depicted in vivid colour on your Mac's screen. Yet the cast started life as pencil drawings, before getting converted into computer format ready to appear in the game.

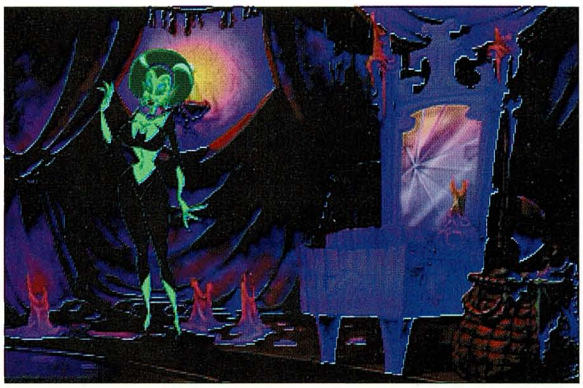
The process of creating model sheets – page after page of sketches of the characters from every angle and in every pose – is essential if you're going to be convinced by the finished animation. Dave Quesnelle, who heads up the animation team at ReadySoft in Canada, says designing for the computer causes problems quite distinct from creating for TV or feature films. 'We must be more aware of the detail on a design, so it does not become too muddy when the artwork is converted to pixels.'

The way to avoiding making your creations look like muddled blobs of dots lies in making them as simple as possible; but you can use that simplicity to make clear statements about each character's personality. They become symbols as much as people. Quesnelle explains, 'The lack of detail combined with the colours and shapes iconifies the characters, making them

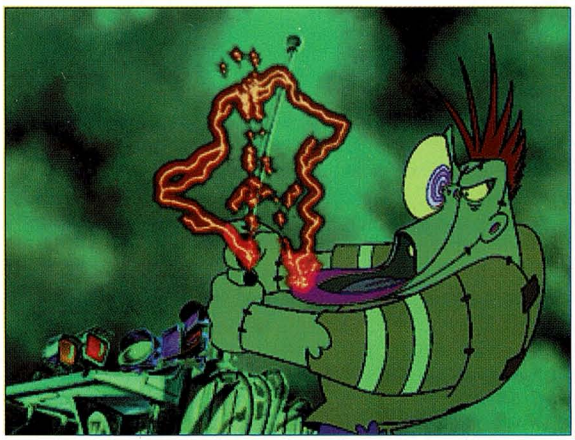


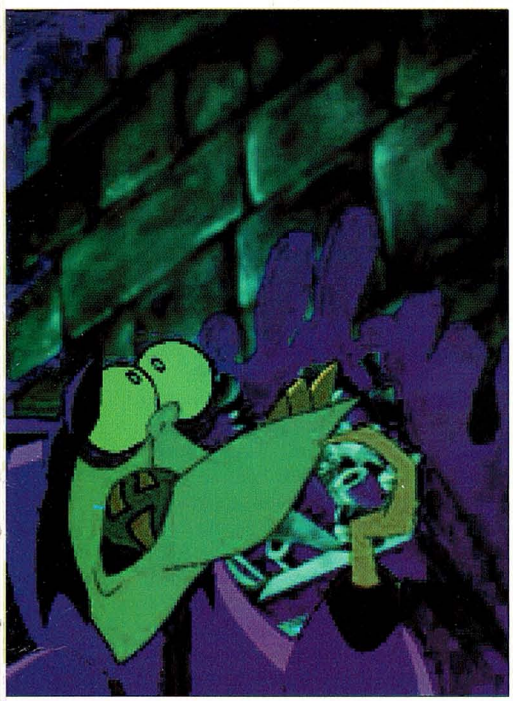
Every aspect of the characters and props are worked out on model sheets, drawings that show how the characters look in different poses and moods.

(Left) A master sheet is used to make sure the proportions of each character are kept consistent. From left: Lance, Fritz and three deadly incarnations of Vvi, a vampire Lance encounters in the game.

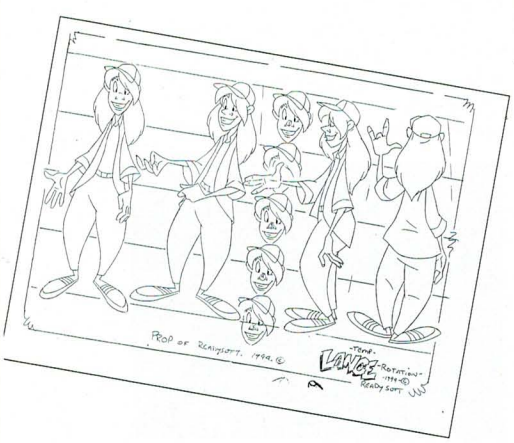


After the careful process of defining the characters is complete, the animators can get to work on telling the story. The characters are animated frame by frame, and the pictures are converted ready to appear on your Mac.





The end result is a feast of cool animation, as Lance battles the forces of Nero Neurosis. And Readysoft say you can expect more of a game from *BrainDead 13* than in previous titles.



more readable on our backgrounds – no matter what size they are, close-up or long shot. The amount of detail on a character does not necessarily make a character.'

The model sheets are used to iron out any problems, making each design into a definitive statement of personality. 'Fritz is the most successful,' says Quesnelle proudly. 'He is the best received by animators and fans, from his beady eyes to the tips of his hooks. He's just fun.'

While the animation maintains the high standard set in the previous ReadySoft titles like *Space Ace*, the way you play the game will be less rigid, enabling you to get more involved. 'You can choose different paths to explore the castle,' says Quesnelle. 'There are different tasks to complete before finally confronting the brain.'

BrainDead 13 has many new characters to meet and many problems to solve before you save the day, but don't think you'll get any clues about what happens from the title. Quesnelle confesses: 'There is no relevance – it's just a title. We wanted something that sounds silly!' MG

Marathon 2

Try the *Marathon 2* demo on this issue's CD-ROM

The best thing that ever happened to the Mac is about to happen again – *Marathon 2* is coming. Garrick Webster talks to makers Bungie Software about improving on perfection.

Everything changed for Mac owners the day *Marathon* came out. No more making excuses for the lack of decent games on the Mac. No more earache from PC-owning pals going on and on about *Doom* or *Doom II*.

Marathon is an action-packed 3D shoot-'em-up where you career around the starship *Marathon* fulfilling missions set by your computerised helpers. It took a one-dimensional game genre – exciting as it was – and added thoughtful details like plot development. In the eyes of Mac game fans everywhere, this game is definitely the best thing ever.

Hold that thought, though. The best thing ever is about to get better. That's because Bungie Software, the firm (MacGod?) that created *Marathon*, are set to release *Marathon 2: Durandal*. 'Let the frenzied anticipation begin,' is what we say, because the game is being improved in many, many ways.

'For *Marathon 2* we've widened the view screen so that it extends the width of the monitor,' says the laid-back Doug Zartman, gamehead and spokesman for Bungie. 'You also have outdoors and underwater scenarios and both of those take advantage of the ambient sounds that we've added for *Marathon 2*.'

Whoa! Outdoors? Underwater? Indeed, *Marathon 2* is a big departure from the dark corridors of the starship Marathon. What happens, you see, is that Durandal, the computer that went loopy during the first *Marathon*, takes off in a Pfhor scoutship at the end of Marathon and beams you onto it as well. Having been Shanghaied by him, you awaken from hypersleep 17 years later to find yourself dumped on the planet that was the original home of the S'Pht (those tall geezers in red robes that floated around the place in *Marathon*). So instead of cold, metallic corridors, it's the ancient ruins of the long-dead S'Pht civilisation you're exploring this time around.

Nevertheless, things sure have changed over 17 years. The whole universe looks and sounds different, for a start. 'There are some really substantial technological improvements in the game,' continues Zartman. 'All of the graphics have been put into 16-bit [a Mac screen setting that can show over 32,000 colours] so you have very high quality source art for the graphics, and the sound samples are of very high quality too.'

This basically means that *Marathon 2* will offer vivid textures and colours in startlingly high detail – as long as you have a fast enough Mac. As you walk down halls, shadows will smoothly recede before you, and the graphic textures will look incredibly feelable. It's almost real, in fact.

'A whole new texture collection has been added, particularly for the outdoor scenes,' says Zartman. 'The whole ambiance of the first *Marathon* was the dark corridors of a spaceship, a lot of mechanical and sort of industrial-looking textures. There is a lot more colour and light in the second *Marathon* and also textures appropriate to an outdoor setting.'

Marathon 2: Durandal gives you the chance to find out what happened after *Marathon* – and shoot things.

If you've a nice, powerful Mac, you can enjoy the luxurious textures used to depict this brutal arena.

MONSTER MAYHEM

Sounds cool? You could say that. *Marathon 2* is going to have stereo sound and will include ambient noises to immerse you in the setting. There will be gurgling streams and howling winds, as well as distant footfalls and sampled voices. 'Those sounds track in real time,' adds Zartman. 'So, let's say you're walking down a hall towards an opening and there's wind outside. You'll hear the wind get louder and louder. That means you can use those sound effects as clues. In a sense, you're interacting with the sound because it can cue you to move in a certain direction towards a sound source. But it can also mask the noise an enemy might make.'

Enemies. Yes. That brings us to the nitty-gritty. Of course, the Pfhor are back for you to dispatch. The S'Pht, the creatures who once lived on the planet, however, left behind them a

(Above) Bet he felt that. The weapons have been redesigned to cause more damage and, of course, look a lot cooler.

(Above) You're able to venture out onto the planet surface, where there are even more critters to dispatch.

selection of guardian cyborgs who still wonder the ruins looking for alien intruders like yourself. They will provide the main monster mayhem.

Never mind though – you'll have the same arsenal. All the weapons have been redesigned to look better, and there's even a new one you'll be able to grab: the double-barrelled shotgun. According to Zartman, it is going to have a devastating scatter-blast effect that will enable you to cut most enemies down in their tracks with some satisfaction.

Blasting enemies and finding weapons will only be part of the challenge. Bungie are also proud that again *Marathon 2* is to have a decent storyline (which we won't give away here) and an array of puzzles.

'We're trying to avoid some of the puzzles in the first one, which were so difficult and time-consuming that people just got frustrated,' says Zartman. He assures us there won't be a repeat of the evil switches-and-platforms puzzle found on the *Marathon* level 'Colony Ship For Sale Cheap', where you had to find switches dotted throughout the level in order to raise platforms, just so you could jump into another part of the ship.

NETWORK CHALLENGE

There will be over 30 levels in total. 'In general, the levels are going to be larger than they are in the first *Marathon*,' says Zartman. 'Players will be spending a relatively longer period of time on any particular level.

'Another thing that makes *Marathon 2* different is that you can network every level of the game. In the first *Marathon* we had single-player levels and network levels that were distinct and designed for different purposes.'

One of the key differences with the network play in *Marathon 2* is the inclusion of a co-operative mode. You don't have to play with the intention of killing other players in this one. Now, you'll have the chance of working through the levels with a party of other players, taking on computer-controlled enemies as a team. But you will be able to shoot and kill your comrades 'accidentally', and there will still be combative net play as well.

There is, of course, one other thing we had to ask Zartman; one ultimate question that no Macintosh gamer could possibly resist. When is *Marathon 2* going to be released?

He's ready for our ambush. 'We don't have a release date. We're keeping our lips sealed on this one!' he replies calmly.

Damn.

MG

COMANCHE
MAC
COMANCHE™, the world's
most popular helicopter simulator,
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A whole new generation of Mac pilots can now meet the RAH-66 Comanche Attack
Helicopter, the deadliest piece of military hardware ever to take to the air. Strap
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LucasArts: the Mac strikes back!

Here's the gospel according to Aaron Giles: '90% of any computer game is music, gameplay, graphics and story. Only around 5% is the actual programming code – so to bring an existing PC game to the Mac doesn't actually require a lot of effort. There's very little reason why games cannot be cross-platform.'

If you really think about it, that's a quote of two halves. Given that many Mac games start life on the PC, it's fantastic news for hardcore Mac gamers – no more eon-long waits for top PC games to be converted. But when you actually sit down and think about the horror behind Giles' oh-so revealing words... I've been missing out on the best games for bloody ages for absolutely no reason at all!

Don't worry. That's all in the past now... The future of the Mac is here, thanks to LucasArts.

LucasArts have been synonymous with quality gameplay for yonks now. Mike Goldsmith has a chat with the games gurus who are bringing the best games to your Mac this Christmas.

'GREAT MAC GAMES'

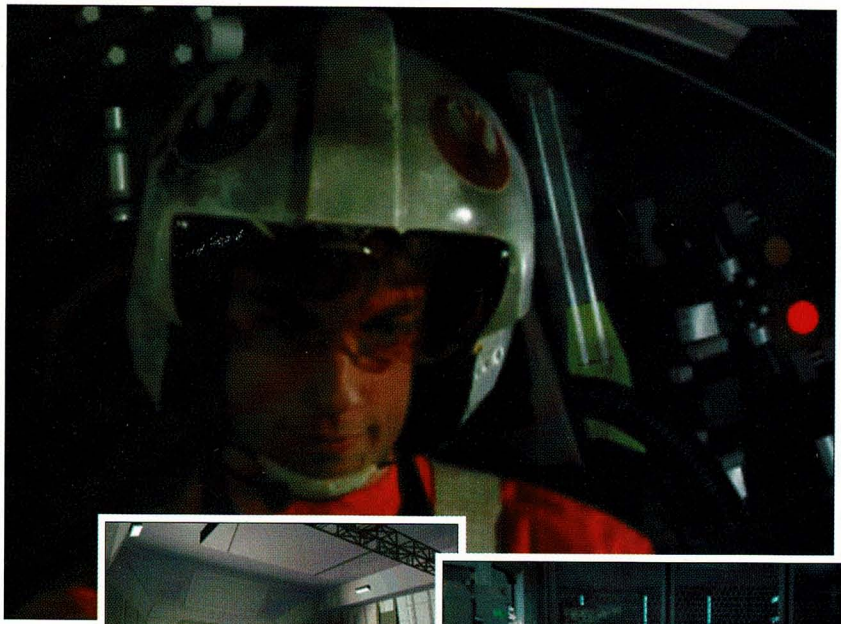
Aaron Giles leans back in his chair, a busy but happy man. He might be a million miles away in San Francisco, but over a crackling transatlantic phone line you can almost hear a smile breaking over Giles' face – and deservedly so. Despite only joining LucasArts in January of this year, his fellow 'conversion guru' Aric Wilmunder and he have managed to shift the focus of LucasArts away from the PC, and let the Mac have its fair share of the fun.

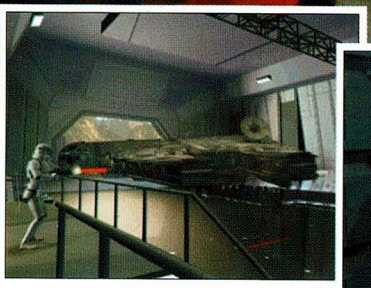
'Our ultimate goal is to produce a great Mac game,' notes Wilmunder, who's in charge of the software, tools and development side of the conversion team – or 'all things to all people' as he puts it. 'Not a conversion or "a few weeks later", but something in its own right. We already use SGIs (powerful but expensive Silicon Graphics computers) for our 3D work, Amigas for our audio and Macs for all our video and voice-editing work. We want to produce the ultimate hybrid, using the best technology that'll run on everything – and that means Macs.'

The best is something LucasArts have been doing for quite some time now. It might be nearly 20 years since the release of George Lucas' all-time classic film *Star Wars*, but Lucas hasn't been content to rest on his laurels. The 5,000-acre Skywalker Ranch, just north of San Fransisco, houses not only LucasArts' successful Games Division but Skywalker Sound, the Oscar-winning Industrial Light and Magic special effects group and of course Lucas' own film-production team – currently deep in pre-production for

Continued on next page

Coming from LucasArts: *The Dig* (top far left), *Full Throttle* (far left) and *Rebel Assault 2* (left and above).





In *Rebel Assault 2*, you a pilot embroiled in a civil war with the Empire. Can you tip the scales in the rebels' favour?

the eagerly-awaited second Star Wars trilogy. It's this experience – including over ten years in the computer gaming industry – that both Giles and Wilmunder believe will offer the very best for the Mac gamer.

'I remember talking to a friend some years ago who calls LucasArts "FrustrationArts",' explains Wilmunder. 'Because we have Industrial Light and Magic, George's fantastic movies, Skywalker Sound... He was expecting TIE Fighters to come shooting out of the game box. Coming into 1996 and the release of both *The Dig* and *Rebel Assault 2*, I think we're finally going to see those TIE Fighters...'

'It's 10 years of solid experience,' adds Giles, chief Mac programmer and directly responsible for bringing this batch of games onto the Mac. 'I really believe the hallmark of LucasArts is the quality of our games. Graphics, storytelling, gameplay – they're all as important as one another.'

'And now we can actually have all these things together,' interjects an enthused Wilmunder. 'George's vision from way back was to meld cinema and computer technology. He's invested, bided his time and with *Rebel Assault 2* – full motion video, 3D animation – it's the ultimate so far.'

Wilmunder is obviously proud of what Giles and he have accomplished: 'We're far too close to it, but *Rebel Assault 2* has truly extended the technology. It'll blow people away.'

COMING SOON

Based around two characters from the original game, Rookie One and Ru Murleen, *Rebel Assault 2* is an arcade-adventure that features both hand-to-hand and cockpit combat. Even though the game's characters are animated, they're based on real actors, whose moves were videotaped while they were kitted out in genuine *Star Wars* costumes and props. Add to that an original story based around the Clone Wars, and this is the closest anyone's going to get to a new *Star Wars* movie until around 1998.

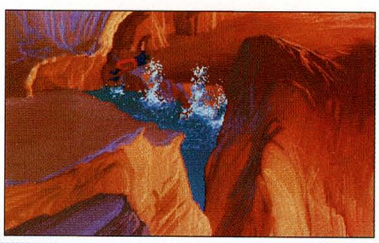
The movie tie-ins are an obviously lucrative resource for LucasArts. Hands up anyone who doesn't want to be Luke Skywalker bombing down the trench – or even shooting wamprats back on Tatooine for that matter. It fits in perfectly with the cinema/computer melting pot that Lucas has always envisaged but – at least for the story-tellers – it must be a tad limiting constantly having to create around someone else's world.

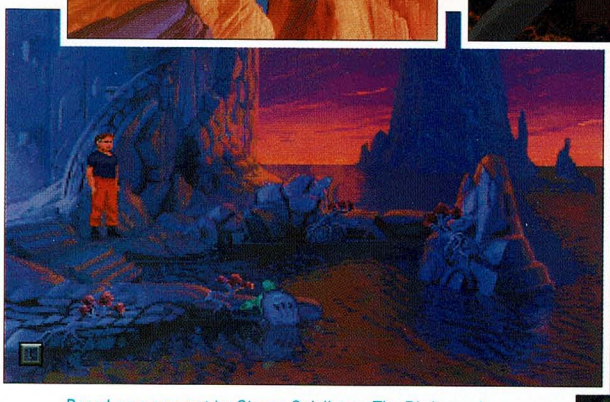
'It's true,' confesses Wilmunder. 'LucasArts can be a two-edged sword. The big advantage is that we don't have to introduce our world – we can take that as given and then shoot off in other directions.'

'Maybe we do have a bit more pride in original storylines,' adds Giles. 'Our own worlds, own plots...'

It's an understandable reaction. No one can have any doubt that LucasArts can do their own thing after games like classics like *The Secret of Monkey Island*, but maybe the best of both worlds is still to come with *The Dig*, the long-awaited adventure game that should hit the shelves in early '96. Based on an idea by Steven Spielberg, it was originally planned as an episode of his *Amazing Stories* TV show, but was abandoned when the budget looked like rocketing skywards.

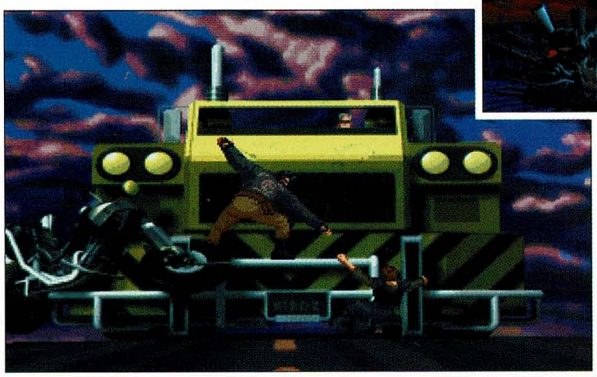
'*The Dig* has been almost five years in the making,' explains Wilmunder. 'The concept was so big it's had complete changes of key personnel, two changes of development software...'





Based on a concept by Steven Spielberg, *The Dig* is a galaxy-spanning epic that tests your brainpower to its limit.

The Dig is obviously a major release for LucasArts. It's still having the finishing touches put to the Mac version – a respect befitting the game's enormity. Set in the near future, the story tells of a team of explorers sent to investigate an asteroid on a collision course with Earth. Alien structures on the its surface appear to form a puzzle, which when solved whisks your team off to a deserted alien planet, millions of light years from home and with just as many unanswered questions.



Full Throttle is LucasArts' most ambitious variation yet on its successful formula of tough puzzles and outrageous humour.

Intriguing? It damn well is. While it conforms to the standard adventure interface – you point, you click, you move – the scope of the release is far more in keeping with the movie origins from which it sprang. The dreaded bogeyman of 'interactive movies' enters our Atlantic-spanning conversation and with the deservedly poor press this fledgling genre has received thus far, Giles understandably pales at such pigeon-holing for his latest baby.

'The interactive movie… I don't think there really is such a thing. We're purely a gaming company.'

'We know we're not a movie company,' adds Wilmunder. 'That's George. We know we're not an special effects department – that's Industrial Light. We know we're not an sound editing team – that's Skywalker. We are a gaming company – and we're happy at that. We know who we are. Maybe we will use live actors in the future… Who knows?'

If LucasArts' latest release, soon to hit Mac monitors worldwide, is anything to go by, they shouldn't be in too much of a hurry. Interactive movies are usually known by their B-movie actors, lame scripts and click-once-then-watch-for-ten-minutes gameplay, but by far the best interactive movie around at the moment has to be the fully-animated *Full Throttle*.

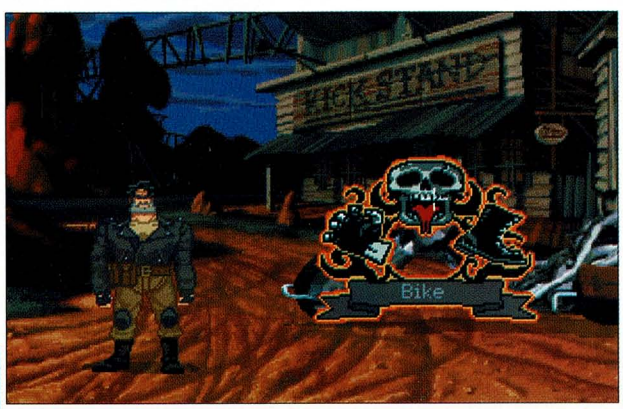
A suitably mean and moody tale, it tells of Ben Throttle, a hard-as-nails biker searching both for his long-lost pals and for crooked businessmen to sneer at. *Full Throttle* is a winning mixture of puzzles and animation, and a wicked pastiche of every macho biker cliché you've ever seen. With a voice-over from Mark Hamill (usually found hamming it up to bad effect in the *Wing Commander* series) as the evil Ripburger, it's a release tailor-made for the smoother, hi-res graphics that the Mac can offer.

FURTHER AHEAD

The future looks bright. *Rebel Assault 2*, *The Dig* and *Full Throttle* are winging their way onto the Mac in the not too distant future – to be swiftly joined by other key releases. Planned for the first few months of 1996, *Mortimer and the Riddles of the Medallion* is an adventure for the 4-9 year-old age range.

Avoiding the showers of salt that rain down on him at every opportunity, Mortimer is a snail who must recover the five pieces of a magic medallion scattered over the planet by the evil Lodius. A mix of flight sim and learning adventure, it's ideal for the more temporally-challenged gamer – but if you're yearning for something a touch more challenging, *Indy's Desktop Adventures* is the ideal release.

A mini-adventure version of the popular puzzle *Minesweeper* (a game where you detect hidden mines on a grid), Indy can be kept tucked in a corner of your desktop and completed at leisure. It might only take an hour of solid puzzle-solving but with over a billion possible scenarios, it's the perfect time-waster for when the boss is looking the other way.



Full Throttle is the first of the new wave of LucasArts to appear, but you can expect a steady stream of games from now on.

As we said, the future looks bright. Giles and Wilmunder leave with a choice titbit of gaming news – the work-in-progress of *AfterLife*, a *SimCity* for the *Full Throttle* generation where it's your job to build, manage and maintain Heaven and Hell (!). Finally, here are the words of encouragement you've been waiting to hear.

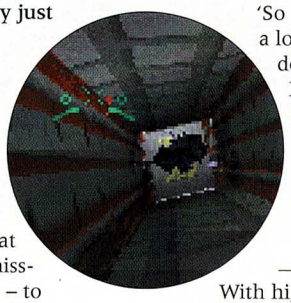
'I'm a total Mac fan,' enthuses Giles. 'My background is with the Mac and by programming these conversions, it means I can play my favourite games without leaving my desk!'

May the force be with him. MG

Descent

It's one of the top games this Christmas, but if you haven't got a PowerMac you can forget it. And even worse elitism is to come. Richard Hill exposes Interplay's plot to the world.

You feel physically sick. You feel struck by the worst sort of vertigo, so you don't know where up or down is anymore. All you crave is the sensation of your feet planted safely on the ground. You've obviously just been playing *Descent.*



Created by American firms Parallax Software and Interplay, *Descent* plunges you into a covert operation that can only lead to trouble of the worst kind. You're a hot-shot pilot given what amounts to a kamikaze mission by uncaring superiors – to take your ship into the heart of enemy territory, then rescue as many hostages and wreck as much of your foe's infrastructure as you can.

Enemy territory in this case is a never-ending series of winding passages and soaring, majestic rooms, filled with flying robots that attack you at every opportunity. It's this terrain that defines the dizzying feel of the game – looking out from your ship, you can glide through the tunnels as they stretch out before you. But because you're afloat, you can also fly up through ceiling vents or down into the depths. You end up swooping an dtwisting around turns in the passages while desparately avoiding robots, not knowing which way you're facing or where you've been. It's quite exhilarating, and it's the sort of game that could only run on the most powerful of desktop computers.

So there's bad news in store if you don't own a PowerMac, because *Descent* won't work on any other Mac. The older Macs – known as 680x0 or 68K Macs after the type of chip inside them – just aren't up to the task of keeping everything moving. But although the PowerMac is catching on fast, there are still about only *(only!)* 2.5 million out there, compared to 18 million or so 68K Macs like LCs, Quadras and most Performas.

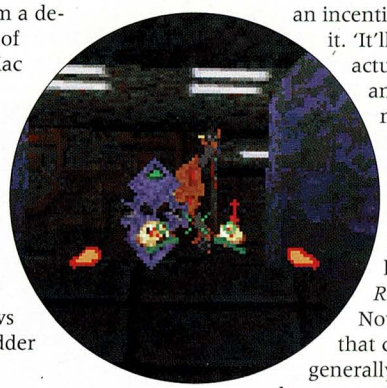
'It was an incredibly difficult decision to make *Descent* a "PowerMac Required" game. After all, we were chopping out most of our market,' admits Bill Dugan, the chief of Interplay's MacPlay division. He feels the game would just have been too slow on non-PowerMacs. 'The question boiled down to the experience that the individual gamer is going to have. We judged that gamers with 68K Macs would end up just not liking *Descent.* We decided to focus all our energies on making *Descent* as great as it can be on the Power Macintosh.

'So sure, we're clearly losing a lot of sales because we don't run on 68K Macs. But we are hoping Power Mac users will love *Descent* all the more and that its popularity will help offset this.'

Domination

With high profile titles like *Frankenstein* and *Dungeon Master 2* either just out or due very soon, MacPlay are clearly behind the Mac as a games machine, choosing to ignore the digs of those who say there's no point in their supporting your computer. 'Mac sales are usually considered to be about 10% of the computer gaming market, yes,' says Dugan. 'We formed the MacPlay division to try and dominate that 10%!

'There are two ways to consider this. Purely from a business standpoint, a lot of people have Macs and they want to play games with them – it's that simple. From a developer standpoint, of course, the PowerMac is a big point of excitement that will get even better as time goes on. And we love Macs – for many of us, the thought of developing Pentium code on the brutal hack that is Windows 95 causes us to shudder in horror.'



Max power!

To further support Dugan's contention that the sizable Mac community deserves better treatment than it's been getting from the games industry, MacPlay are working on an enhanced version of *Descent* that not even all PowerMac owners will be able to run!

But this is not a scheme to create the most elitist game ever. In fact, it may turn out to be a master stroke that will create a whole new market and give you better games than you'll find on any other computer.

Descent is being rewritten to support QuickDraw 3D, the new technology from Apple that enables you to create stunning 3D effects more easily than ever before. Programs like *Strata Studio Pro* and *Infini-D* will be able to create detailed images based on 3D models more quickly. You'll also be able to exchange files directly between QuickDraw 3D programs, something that's been a pain with 3D software so far.

Best of all, QuickDraw 3D is able handle animation superbly, shifting you around detailed scenes with little hassle. And extra hardware cards you can fit in your Mac will speed things up even further, giving you the sort of complex images you'd expect from a high-cost Silicon Graphics machine – the computer that was used to create the original scenes for *Myst.*

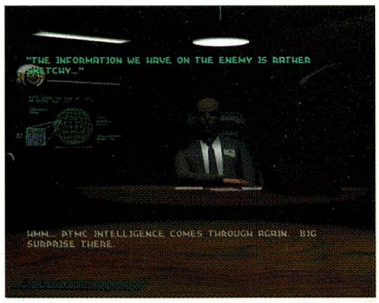
This peach is too juicy for MacPlay to ignore; and so you can look forward to the new-look *Descent* – rewritten to work only on a PowerMac fitted with QuickDraw 3D and an accelerator card. Dugan sums up the incentive for him with some measure of understatement: 'It'll be incredibly fast.'

Dugan believes MacPlay's support of the coolest technology around will be an incentive for you to go get it. 'It'll be terrific if people actually buy the cards and thus create a market. The hardware we're talking about is the same kind of hardware that makes Sony PlayStation games like *Toh Shin Den* or *Ridge Racer* look great. Now consider the fact that computer games are generally *deeper* than console games…'

Dugan thinks the Mac is perfect for more imaginative games than you'll find on a Sega. 'True, the most obvious application for fast 3D polygon drawingis for the twitch games [fast reaction shooters like *Descent],* but imagine what could be done with a great first-person RPG, or some sort of on-line MUD [multi-user dungeon], with animated 3D characters being controlled live as you run around with your friends on a network to solve quests. I can't wait.' **MG**

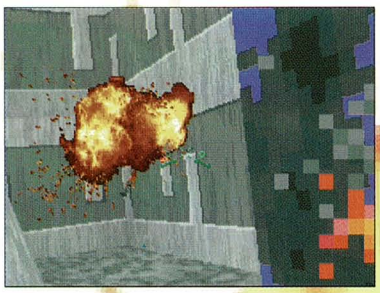
DataPoint

Descent is out now and costs around £40. You'll need a PowerMac with System 7, 5.5Mb of free RAM, a 256-colour screen, 17Mb of hard disk space and a double-speed CD-ROM drive. For more details contact Interplay on 01235 821666.

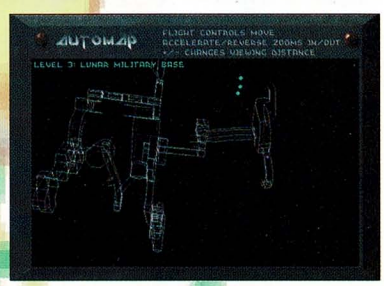


Descent plunges you into subterranean strife as you explore a world in 3D.

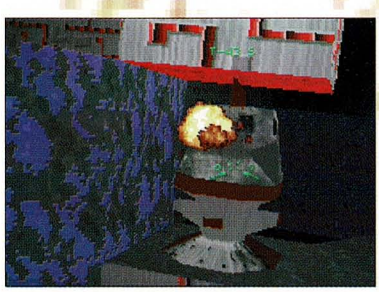
The first thing you know about your mission is when you're sent to certain death by your boss.



Your main tasks are to rescue our chaps behind enemy lines – and survive yourself.

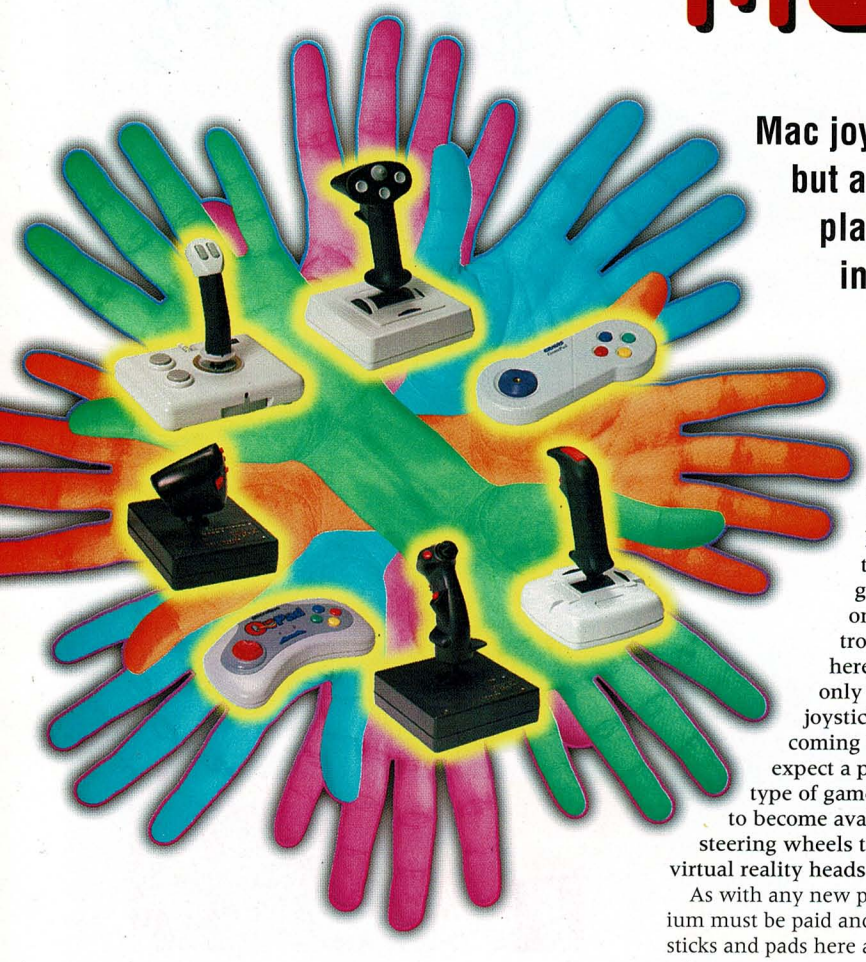


You can take stock of your situation by consulting your map – only it's in 3D too!



Stay alive by dispatching robot drones and destroying a succession of crucial generators.

Sticky moments



Mac joysticks and joypads are expensive, but a good one improves your games-playing so much it's worth its weight in gold. Ben Rodd tests the range.

It doesn't take long for manufacturers to sniff out a new market. And with the number of games for the Mac on the up, the controllers we examine here probably form only the tip of the joystick iceberg. In the coming months you can expect a plethora of every type of games control system to become available, from steering wheels to fully blown virtual reality headsets.

As with any new product, a premium must be paid and most of the sticks and pads here are available for other computers at up to half the price. It does seem unreasonable, though, to bump the prices up by such a degree when all that's changed is the connector on the end of the lead. But you have to look a bit deeper with many of these sticks.

The software supplied is usually excellent, with on-screen programming and the ability to save entire button set-ups for individual games. Some software goes even further and includes the ability to customise the movement behaviour of the sticks themselves. At this level you really do get what you pay for.

You'll need a Mac with an ADB (Apple Desktop Bus) socket to use any of the controllers reviewed here – but very Mac from the SE has had one. Any software the controller needs will take up very little of your Mac's memory. Remember, though, that as well as any system requirements a joystick might have, you'll still have to take account of the requirements of any games you buy for it.

Flightstick Pro

Standing head and shoulders above the rest of the pack is the Flightstick Pro. The large, moulded stick with front pistol grip and rear buttons sits comfortablly in any hand, big or small. The base is solid and heavy, and while it demands more than its fair share of desk space, having it slip around while you play is just not an option.

The four-way hat switch means that there is never an unseen bogey but the stick's design doesn't limit it to the simulator arena alone. The Flightstick Pro is at home whether you're screaming round Brands Hatch, blasting aliens or cruising at 20,000 feet. The only reservation is that the ease of travel (the amount of effort you need to move the stick) is verging on the slack. Adjustable tension in the same vein as the MouseStick would help.

The software is simple and straightforward, enabling you to save separate set-ups for individual games; and you have almost as many customised response options as you'd get with the much pricier Flight Control System. The throttle control mounted in the base allows most operations to be completed without touching the keyboard. An adjustable, software-driven autofire function completes the irresistibility of this package.

FLIGHTSTICK PRO

Price: £99.99. **Out:** now
Requires: any Mac with an ADB port (except Mac 128, 512, 512e or Mac Plus) with System 6.0.7 and later.
Contact: ISM on 0121 327 4499.

MACGAMER RATING **84%**

Gravis MouseStick 2

The basic MouseStick has been around for some time and has recently been updated to the MouseStick 2, which has 5 independently programmable buttons. The basic design has stayed the same however, and after you've used it for ten minutes, you'll see why.

The generous base gives good support with little slippage, and the large rear buttons for your thumbs are easily located. The tension on the stick is variable, which ensures the MouseStick's suitability for both arcade-style and more serious games.

Once installed, the MouseStick 2 Control Panel contains an 'Application Aware' button. This may be used to set the stick's buttons for individual games. These settings are then kept in a small file and may be invoked when the appropriate game is loaded.

As with the majority of the joysticks on test here, technical support is limited. Gravis have thoghtfully provided a handy on-screen problem solving guide, which is installed with the driver software – but if you need to talk to somebody it will cost you a phone call to The States.

GRAVIS MOUSESTICK 2

Price: £69.99. **Out:** now
Requires: any Mac with an ADB port.
Contact: Leisuresoft on 01604 768711.

MACGAMER RATING **79%**

Gravis GamePad

'Rather drab' is the first impression when confronted with the Gravis GamePad. But the four coloured buttons do their job, and the direction controller has a little detachable stick for those of us with large hands, who might find it a bit fiddly otherwise.

The control switch on the side switches you between keystroke-mimicking mode and normal mouse cursor control. The GamePad excels at the fast on-screen action, joystick-battering fun of arcade games. As with the MouseStick II, the user can program the GamePad to be 'Application Aware' and different combinations of button commands relating to different games may be called up easily from the software.

One fact that other manufactures seem to have forgotten about is that a significant proportion of the population are left handed. But the GamePad has a clever symmetrical design, so that you can turn it round: the software takes care of the button and direction swapping and hey presto – a left handed joystick.

GRAVIS GAMEPAD

Price: £39.99. **Out:** now
Requires: any Mac with an ADB port and System 6.0.7 or later.
Contact: Leisuresoft on 01604 768711.

MACGAMER RATING **72%**

Jetstick

To say that the Jetstick is the Flightstick Pro's baby brother would tarnish the latter's good name. It is just not in the same league: but then again the Jetstick is half the price.

The quality of build is similar to the Flightstick's, but as far as features go the Jetstick is sorely lacking. The travel and tension on the stick is quite slack and reminiscent of a cheap joystick intended for flight simulation. But its lack of buttons and throttle put it slap bang in the middle of the shoot-'em-up arena. The makers of the Jetstick don't seem to know at which market they're aiming it at.

Even though movement is perhaps too easy, the stick is responsive and fits in the hand well. Nevertheless, the stick has a tendency to drift from its settings and you may find yourself having to pop up the joystick settings window every so often.

As the cheapest serious attempt at a joystick, it functions perfectly adequately, but save up for a bit longer and you can have the adjustable tension and the extra buttons on the Gravis MouseStick 2.

JETSTICK

Price: £49.99. **Out:** now
Requires: any Mac with an ADB port (except Mac 128, 512, 512e or Mac Plus) with System 6.0.7 and later.
Contact: ISM on 0121 327 4499.

MACGAMER RATING **63%**

QuePad

Comfortably held in both hands, the contours of the QuePad make it easy to use with your thumbs and ensure that long gaming periods are possible without blisters setting in. Four buttons adorn the right hand side of the pad, and another couple are included to save you from scrabbling around the keyboard while you're playing one of those ever more key-intensive 3D shooters like *Marathon* or *Doom 2*.

The pad is let down in a number of ways. It is sluggish and unresponsive, and your thumb has a tendency to slip off the direction controller. Rather less important – but just as tacky – is that instead of reprinting the case with lettering that's appropriate to the Mac, the makers MicroQue have simply stuck a rather inadequate sticker over the console markings. The old lettering still shines through; and not only are you paying twice as much as those games consoles owners for exactly the same joypad, but the manufacturer is rubbing your face in it.

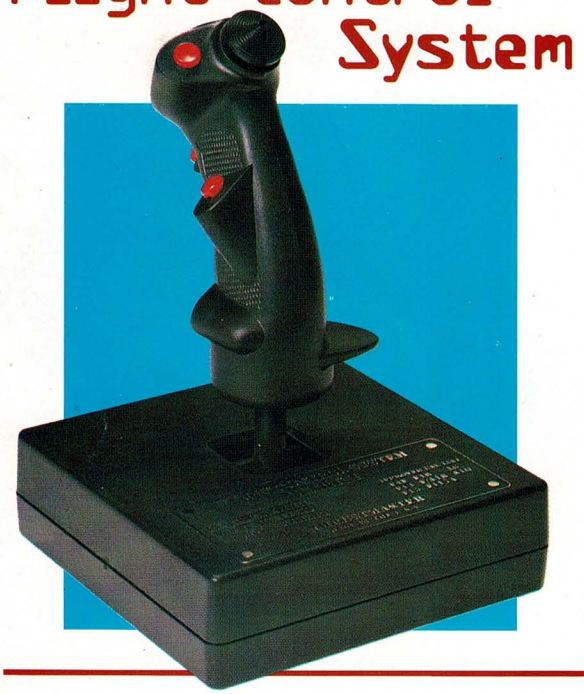
The documentation doesn't improve things. A single, scrappy A4 sheet of photocopied instructions is all that is supplied and there's no UK helpline for those in trouble.

QUEPAD

Price: £44.99. **Out:** now
Requires: any Mac with an ADB port.
Contact: Softline on 0181 401 1234.

MACGAMER RATING **52%**

Flight Control System



Let's get the obvious criticism out the way first. Shelling out £175 for a joystick means one of three things: you regard playing flight simulators as an important hobby; you have more money than sense; or you are completely off your rocker. No matter how good a joystick is, it doesn't warrant this sort of outlay.

But money and sanity troubles aside, does the Flight Control System (FCS) make the grade? The short answer is no.

The FCS adheres to the HOTAS (hands on throttle and stick) concept, making playing your flight sim more like piloting a real plane. It's actually a replica of the control found in genuine F-4 Phantom aircraft. To benefit from the throttle part, you'll also have to purchase the Weapons Control System (reviewed below), but the four buttons and the rocker hat switch (the knobbly bit on top) on the FCS are well positioned and easy to find in the middle of a dogfight. Unfortunately this highly specific positioning renders the joystick practically useless for any other type of game.

Nevertheless, if flying an F-4 Phantom is your cup of tea there really isn't anything better to control it with. The stick is as responsive as they come and the contoured handle fits a variety of hand sizes perfectly. The supplied software ensures that the user can program each button to mimic a keyboard press or combination, and the stick's response can be tailored to your needs. You might say that this is a stick for retentive connoisseurs.

FLIGHT CONTROL SYSTEM

Price: £174.99. **Out:** now
Requires: Any Mac with an ADB port and System 7.
Contact: Contemporary Games on 0181 577 1700.

MACGAMER RATING **49%**

Weapons Control System

Designed to accompany the FCS, it seems strange that the ThrustMaster Weapons Control System (WCS) should be a replica of the F-15 throttle and not the F-4, like the FCS. But if you're in the market for a setup like this, you will know the answer why.

The WCS throttle moves in an arc and has several notches – points of slight resistance – in the movement to denote engine off, idle and afterburner. The weapons system is controlled by 6 buttons and a three-way rocker. This switch can be used in conjunction with the comprehensive software supplied to pre-program a number of different combinations of commands to the various buttons.

Flight simulators are renowned for having a multitude of complicated keyboard-press combinations and this ability to control everything from the sticks might seem like the answer to a budding sim addict's dream. But in practice, it was much easier simply to remember a number of combination keyboard presses than cope with some esoteric rocker switch shenanigans.

The simple act of using the FCS and the WCS together proved difficult, especially when you get overexcited and one of the bases propels an odd beverage across the room. Don't drink and drive (or fly): you'll spill it. MG

WEAPONS CONTROL SYSTEM

Price: £119.99. **Out:** now
Requires: The Weapons Control System works in tandem with the ThrustMaster Flight Control System.
Contact: Contemporary Games on 0181 577 1700.

MACGAMER RATING **19%**

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The MacGamer Hall of Fame

You haven't got a great games machine until you've got great games. Simple as that. Pinning down the qualities that make one game stand out from the hundreds on the shop shelf is more difficult. You usually know when you've got something special on your Mac screen – but how?

The answer ultimately lies in gameplay. It's a simple term used to describe a complicated set of factors, which combine to make a game a pleasure. Good gameplay happens when the designers have put a lot of thought into what it's like while you're playing their game.

It's in the details; like putting the control keys where your fingers can rest comfortably on them, so you can press keys without having to think about which one does what. It's about judging the difficulty so that it's not just frustrating to play, but still presents a challenge you can feel proud of completing.

Gameplay is setting a task that you actually want to complete, which is where elements like good graphics and sound come in. These add to the experience, presenting the information you need clearly or making you believe you're on another world. Once you know what's at stake, you need to feel well rewarded when you've completed the mission. You might learn crucial new details that advance your knowledge of your surroundings, or try an intriguing variation on a familiar puzzle. The skill lies in varying what you do in the game in imaginative, surprising ways.

And gameplay's about fun. Get the balance of other factors right, and you might still be missing the enigmatic missing idea that rises your game above the pack and makes it great fun to play. The answer lies not in skill but in inspiration.

The MacGamer Hall of Fame celebrates the games that have got it right; where you'll have such a good time you won't want to stop. In this inaugural selection, we've also tried to pick the titles that have made a difference and have changed your perception of the Mac. It's true to say that without these great games, there would be no great games machine.

Let the awards presentation begin...

With so many games now out on the Mac, it's time to recognise the greats you should have in your collection. But which titles are good enough to receive the ultimate accolade?

A-10 Attack!

Most Aerodynamic

The flight sim *A-10 Attack!* speeds away from the competition to pick up a Hall of Fame award.

The Mac isn't short of a decent flight sim or two, with fine titles like *Flying Nightmares* and *F/A-18 Hornet*. *A-10 Attack!* comes out ahead of the rest by a nose cone. But if you're looking for instant gratification, go elsewhere. By trying to imitate the controls and actions of a real plane as closely as possible, *A-10* demands that you persevere if you want to succeed.

The real plane that *A-10* emulates played a key role in the Gulf War, destroying over 3,000 targets, and there are plenty of bombing missions to try here. What's impressive is the attention to detail. As time passes, the skies around you turn red then black until dawn comes round once more; while the plane cockpit gives you a complex but responsive array of controls, which you can just click on to adjust.

Makers Parsoft harbour ambitions beyond merely doing well what others have done before. Touches like the game's ability to co-ordinate its display across up to three monitors, for example, show that they want you to have the ultimate flight experience without leaving your Mac.

With the chance to take on tanks or a fleet of ships (in the form of network combat against a friend playing a different Parsoft game) coming up, *A-10's* cleared for take off.

■ *A-10 Attack!* costs £58.74. For more details contact Softline on 0181 401 1234.

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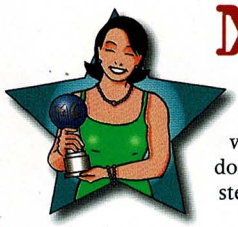


Best Use of Unnecessary Force

Doom 2: Hell on Earth

Here's a late gatecrasher into the Hall of Fame, forcing its way through our immaculate oak doors with the skilful application of steel-capped boot, a loaded double-barrel shotgun in its hand.

Barely out on the Mac, *Doom 2* was preceded by its reputation. It took the 3D corridors of polite role-playing games like *Dungeon Master*, set them spinning with movement and threw out the story-line. Far from shying away from the graphic reality of the damage guns can inflict, it amplified it for dramatic effect. The game carries a 15 certificate in the UK and it has become perhaps the most popular computer game of all. Co-incidence?

You only need to know one rule to play: every living thing wants very badly to kill you.

Doom 2 takes advantage of the speed of the modern Mac, plunging you into a high-octane world of violence and guts and blood. Gruesome nasties like the Spider Mastermind and the Revenant Zombie Demon attack you at every turn.

There's no avoiding the consequences of violence in *Doom 2*, but it's justly become one of the most popular computer games ever written.

Some people will hate everything *Doom 2* stands for, or at least what they believe it stands for. It's pure escapist fantasy, setting your most primal instincts free and sending the pulses racing like nothing else on the Mac.

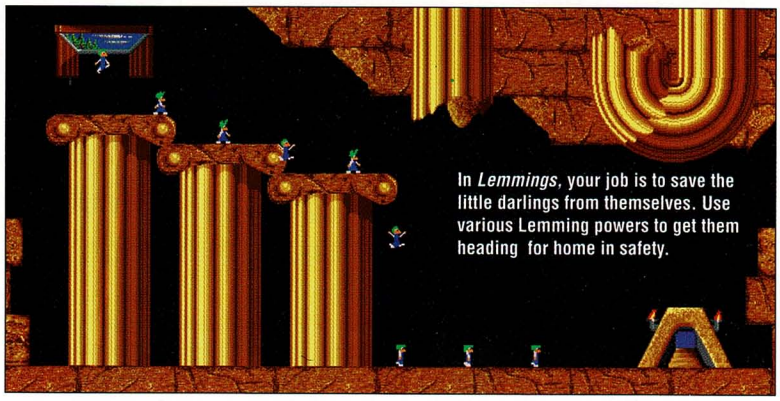
■ *Doom 2* costs £44.99. For more details contact Virgin on 0181 368 2255.

Most Bloody Infuriating

Lemmings

When Psygnosis named their puzzle game *Lemmings*, do you think they were talking about the creatures on the screen or the people trying to play it? Because anyone embarking on some of the most cunning puzzles yet devised must have some sort of latent self-destructive urge.

The lemmings of the title are barely a few screen pixels tall. You set them off on their way to the exit home, across a perilous landscape where obstacles and traps lie in wait. And they just won't stop, walking straight into every hazard unless you can find a way to divert them. You can assign abilities to some of your lemmings, helping them to help themselves. Sometimes you even have to sacrifice a few so the majority may live.



In *Lemmings*, your job is to save the little darlings from themselves. Use various Lemming powers to get them heading for home in safety.

From a easy opening as you learn about the game, *Lemmings* builds until you have to perform superhuman feats of imagination and timing to crack the puzzles. When all else fails and you can't see a way through, ease the frustration by using the bomb to put them out of your misery.

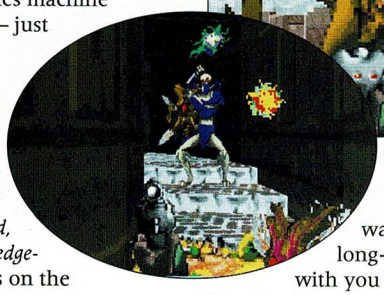
Games like *Lemmings* come along only once every few years – easy to learn and deeply compelling, but like no other game you've seen before.

■ *Lemmings* is available as part of Complete *Lemmings*, which costs £29.99. For more details contact Sony Interactive on 0151 282 3000.

Best Ambassador

Marathon

There's a belief in some parts of the games industry that any successful games machine needs a 'killer app' – just that one title, unavailable anywhere else, which is so good you have to buy the computer. Nintendo had *Super Mario Land*, Sega had *Sonic the Hedgehog* – but *Marathon* is on the Mac and only the Mac.



A superb game that's single-handedly done a great deal to boost the Mac's reputuation among gamesplayers, *Marathon* thoroughly deserves its award.

And it is genuinely a great game – although in its first few minutes of play, you'd be forgiven for thinking it's another 3D shoot-'em-up in the tradition of the PC killer app *Doom*. But the artfulness of the designers soon asserts itself; you're drawn into a tense tale of warlike aliens and long-dead civilisation, with you surrounded by hostile aliens, just trying to stay alive.

It doesn't have the adrenaline-driven instinctive play of *Doom*, but something more insidious. Aided and frustrated in turn by your allies as you fight overwhelming forces, you start to understand what stress really is.

Soon *Marathon* won't be ours alone any more: a conversion for the PC is in the works, and after that, who knows? But as *Marathon* seeps into the consciousness of games players everywhere, one thought will soon overcome all others, no matter how hard they try to resist it – we've got *Marathon 2*.

■ *Marathon* costs £58.74. For more details contact Softline on 0181 401 1234.

Myst

Taking you into a world like no other – it can only be *Myst*, one of the most-imitated games around.

Let us review the evidence and ask ourselves: 'Does *Myst* truly deserve a place in the Hall of Fame?'

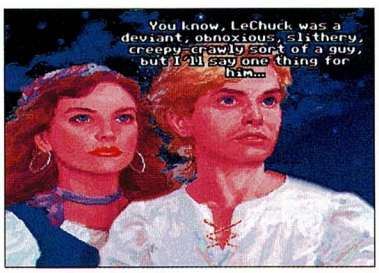
The case for: *Myst* brings a new approach to games, immersing you in a story so much that you live it. It uses sumptuous graphics and evocative sounds to make you think you're actually there, and overwhelms you with such a level of detail that you come to know the fantasy world of Myst Island as well as you know your own. Without *Myst*, today's interactive movies might have been longer in coming.

The case against: there are times where you want to tear your hair and out with frustration – usually when you're trying to crack one of the more random puzzles. It abandons the joy of playing a game, of interacting with your Mac, in favour of dazzling you with a film you could have watched on video for two quid. Without *Myst*, today's interactive movies might have been longer in coming.

So is *Myst* just a collection of pretty pictures looking for a game? Well... yes, but it's found one. It was the game that showed what could be achieved with the CD-ROM medium, which was nothing but a fresh upstart against the floppy disk when *Myst* was first released.

■ *Myst* costs £44.99. For more details contact Brøderbund on 01753 620909.

The Secret of Monkey Island



Romance and adventure come together in the old-but-still-wonderful *Secret of Monkey Island*.

With QuickTime video and glossy 3D animation at their disposal when they're designing games, programmers sometimes lose sight of their target, forgetting you're supposed to be playing the game, not watching a bloomin' film.

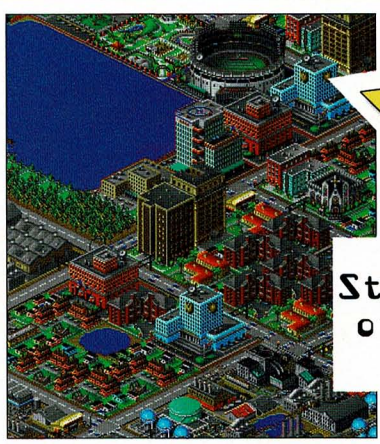
The Secret of Monkey Island pulls off an amazing feat: it's a game that demands your active participation from start to finish, yet it reminds you of all the wonderful films you've ever seen. There's daring pirate adventure as Guybrush Threepwood, an innocent abroad if ever there was, gets caught up in intrigue and dark plotting. There's full-blown teary-eyed romance as his eyes meet those of his true love, only to lose her (careless!). And most-of-all, unashamedly daft, laugh-out-loud comedy.

The success of *Monkey Island* fuelled LucasArts' imagination, driving them on create bigger and better titles. You'll still see the basic style of simple but effective graphics and a quick, flexible control system in the latest, *Full Throttle*. But *Monkey Island* remains the inspiration behind them all.

Others tried to imitate LucasArts before their eyes glazed over with 3D graphics and real actors, but few ever got it: the reason *Monkey Island* is a great film is because you can play it.

■ *The Secret of Monkey Island* costs just £16.99. For more details contact Kixx XL on 0121 625 3311.

SimCity 2000



After playing the intensely absorbing *SimCity 2000* and trying to run a city, you'll never moan about the local council again. Much.

Just as someone once attempted to copyright the @ symbol so he could charge royalties on e-mail addresses, Maxis seem to be staking a heavy claim on the word 'sim'. And yet it could have been so boring. Who would have guessed we'd get hooked on building cities from scratch – collecting taxes, designing a jam-free transport system and keeping the streets safe from crime?

The Sim series began with *SimCity*, a new type of computer game that rewarded patience and planning. A huge hit, the program fostered spin-off attempts to get us hooked on customising everything from ant farms *(SimAnt)* to tower blocks *(SimTower)* to the planet Earth (oh, you get the idea).

But the crown goes to an inspired update of the original. *SimCity 2000* added lush 3D graphics to the basic concept of making cities with building blocks. The move added just enough of a touch of realism to give you literally a new perspective on something we all take for granted. Now you're responsible for everything from finding space for airports to managing the sewers. You can see the city at all levels and learn how they inter-relate. Play and serious learning have rarely been so enjoyably intertwined.

■ *SimCity 2000* costs around £40. For more details contact Maxis on 0171 490 2333.

Win the greatest games in the world

We have two exclusive game collections worth a total of £600 to be won, courtesy of Softline and Kixx XL. All you have to do is tell us about the best Mac game you've ever played.

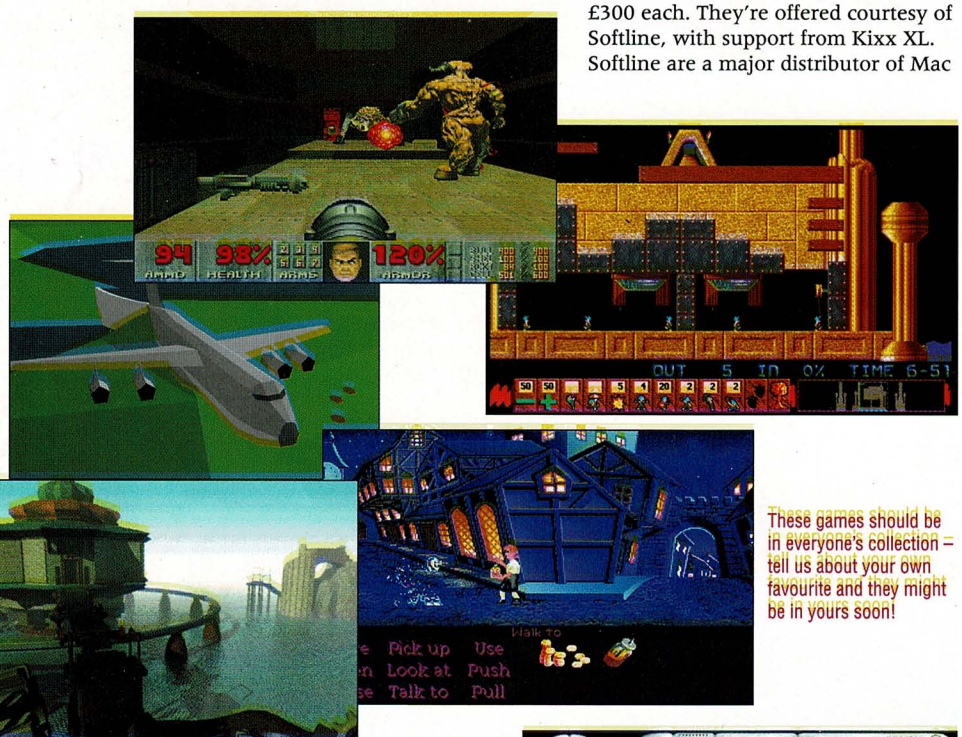
The Mac has a proud gaming past littered with good titles. Over the last few pages, you've read about the ones we've admitted into the MACGAMER Hall of Fame, where we celebrate the games we think have defined the Mac – but what do you think?

We want you to nominate an extra title. Think of the Mac game that means the most to you and tell us why you think it's so good. It doesn't matter if it's a new favourite or a golden oldie that just won't stay in the cupboard. All that counts is that you consider it to be a great Mac game.

You have 150 words to explain which game you think should be added to the Hall of Fame and why it deserves the honour. Just try and justify *Mad Dog McCree* to us – we dare you. If you come up with one of the two most convincing and interesting nominations, you'll win one of two Hall of Fame games bundles.

These are collections of all of the seven games you've just been reading about, and would usually cost around £300 each. They're offered courtesy of Softline, with support from Kixx XL. Softline are a major distributor of Mac games and other programs in Britain, servicing mail order dealers and shops all over Britain with the latest titles. Without their behind-the-scenes work, you'd find it a lot harder to get the games you want. Kixx XL keep classic titles alive with a low-cost range of some of the best Mac titles ever written – *The Secret of Monkey Island*, *Another World* and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

The closing date for your entry is Friday 5 January 1996. Don't forget to post early for Christmas! Write to: 'I can't believe you missed out...', MACGAMER, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.



These games should be in everyone's collection – tell us about your own favourite and they might be in yours soon!

THE RULES

Your nomination must be no longer than 150 words and shouldn't be for a game that's already been awarded a place in the Hall of Fame. Employees of Softline, Centregold, Future Publishing Ltd or associated companies, or members of their families, are not allowed to enter. Multiple entries are not allowed, unless they're attached to an original arcade console of *Dig-Dug*. The editor's decision is final, no correspondence will be entered into, and there is no cash alternative available. Please state if you don't want your name added to a mailing list. Look out for the names of the winners in a future issue of MACFORMAT, along with excerpts from the best entries. MG

THE PRIZES

These are the games that make up our Hall of Fame collection:
A-10 Attack! (£58.74)
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(Special bonus – *Lemmings* plus *Oh No! More Lemmings*)
Doom 2: Hell on Earth (£44.99)
Marathon (£58.74)
Myst (£44.99)
The Secret of Monkey Island (£16.99)
The SimCity 2000 CD Collection (£44.99)
Marathon, *SimCity 2000*, *Myst* and *Doom 2* come on CD-ROM, so you'll have to own a CD-ROM drive to play them.

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Full Throttle - Motorcycles, mayhem and murder in this new graphic adventure from Lucas Arts. One minute you're on the road roading. Next minute some guy in a suit comes along - says he's got a deal for you. When you come to, you've got a lump on your head, the law on your back, and a feeling in your gut that the road you're on is about to get a lot tougher. Available on CD at £32.95

Power Pete - armed with an arsenal of toy shop weapons from toothpaste guns to exploding birthday cakes, you must mow down the evil toys while delivering captured fuzzy bunnies to safety. Fur will fly as you travel through 15 levels of arcde action in five spectacular toy lands in this Sega-style game complete with speech and stereo sound track. Power Pete is available on CD at £25.95.

Misc

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Star Trek The Next Generation Technical			

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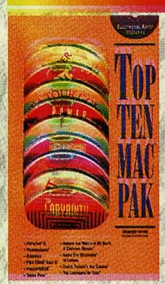

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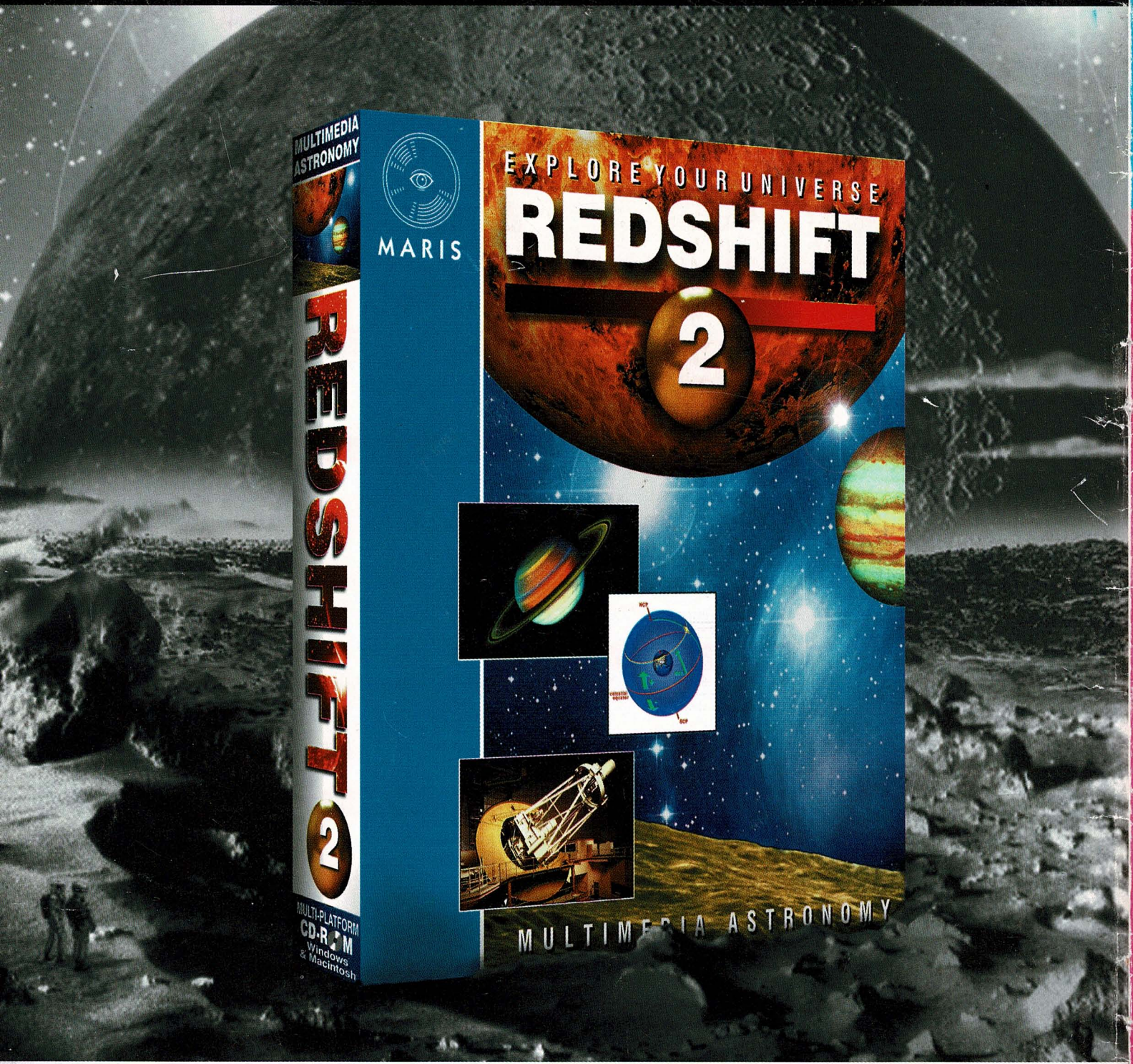

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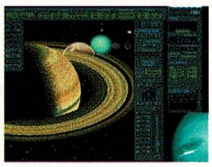

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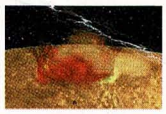

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